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كل نفس ذائقة الموت

Every soul must taste of death

موت کا منظر مع مرنے کے بعد کیا ہوگا؟

(The Spectacle of Death)

THE SCENE OF DEATH AND WHAT HAPPENS AFTER DEATH

By

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the Name of God, the Most Beneficent and Merciful

BEWARE

God alone is worthy of all Praise, Who sent down death upon the greatest oppressors and the mightiest of men and wrigged their necks ; and broke the backs of the greatest kings ; and extinguished the hopes, the aspirations of the possessors of enormous hordes and treasures by putting an end to their lives. Everyone of these persons demurred even at a hint of death, but when the promise of the Almighty (the time of death) came to pass, they were thrown into a pit and were tumbled from their high palaces to the depths of earth, they were lifted from their soft beds under the sparkle and glare of electric lights and were hurled into the darkness of the grave. They were engaged in dalliance with their slaves and hand-maids when they were given over to the worms and insects, and instead of enjoying the delights of eating and drinking they were rolling in dust ; and they became lonely prisoners in wilderness instead of enjoying the convivial society of friends. So ! Did these people build castles strong enough to protect them from the onslaught of death ? Did they adopt any other means to keep death away ? Hence there is one and the only Pure Lord and none shares His Supreme Might and Wrath. He alone is Everlasting and has no equal. Hence ! when death

is inevitable for everyone and everyone must become one with earth and join the worms in the grave ; when everyone must face Munkir and Nakeer (the names of two angels who examine the souls of the dead in the grave) ; when one must lie under the ground for a long while and has to abide there for a prolonged period of time and then one has to witness the severe spectacle of doom. Thereafter it is uncertain whether one is destined to abide in Paradise or Hell. It is imperative then that the reflection of death should be ever present in the minds of men. My friends ! However prolonged this worldly life may be, it is mortal and must end and however great may be the possessions of this world, one day they are bound to be left behind.

The eternal life is immortal ; its blessings are ever-lasting. In view of all this it needs no explaining to a man of ordinary sense that one should opt for something which is everlasting. On the other hand to hanker after something which is transitory is the height of folly. But our reason is beclouded by stupor. We are enamoured of the embellishments of the waiting room of this station where the period of our stay ends with the arrival of the train. It would certainly be to his advantage if during this short period of waiting a person should busy himself with the preparations and arrangements of goods for his journey and making provisions for those things which will prove useful on arrival at the eternal home. If on the other hand he wastes his short but precious time of leisure in going around the place and while his own goods are lying scattered he should set about dusting

and furnishing the waiting room ; and what's even more foolish if he should get busy in purchasing mirrors and maps for hanging in this room, he will not only lose his ordinary provisions but also his most valuable goods.

Almighty says :

"O those who keep faith ! Let not your goods and your offspring make you heedless towards the remembrance of God. And if a person does this, he will be among such people as are the losers. And whatever God has provided you with, spend out of it before someone's death approaches and he should say : 'O my Creator ! Why didn't you grant me a few days respite so that I could give away in charity and be counted among those who are righteous.' God certainly grants no respite to any man when the time of his death approaches and God is well-Aware of all your deeds." The occupation of gathering wealth and valuable goods and the care of family and offspring are those things which become the cause of indifference in carrying out the commands of Almighty Allah. Take heed lest you should depart with full awareness that you are leaving behind your family and offspring and all your goods and valuable possession. To-day you have time enough. So do what you must.

Verse :

Dye the crown of your head, knot thy hair in plaits ; For aught you know, presently the Beloved may send for thee: thou can't do much on the appointed day : And there will be much to do ; but thou wilt only lie still and stare.

My friends and elders ! May the Almighty God be kind to you. Avoid negligence and be alert. Wake up from your slumber, before the shout goes around that such and such a person has fallen ill; now he is in a critical state, all hope is lost ; tell us about a good physician ; go bring a skilled doctor. Then physicians and medical experts are called to examine you one after the other and none of them is able to give you hope of survival. Thereafter it is noised about that the sick man has started making out legacies. Lo and behold ! his tongue swells in his mouth, he mumbles ; now he no longer recognizes anyone ; he is hard of breath ; he moans ; his lashes drop. At this moment you begin to know the state of eternity. But his tongue falters ; he is speechless. His family and kinsmen stand around and weep. Now the son comes forward, now the wife, but the man's tongue is paralysed. Presently his soul begins to escape from the limbs of his body and at last flies away to heaven. The kith and kin at once start preparing the funeral. The cries and laments of the sympathisers are over and they are calm now. The enemies are jubilant. The kinsmen are busy dividing the estate ; and as for the dead man, he lies entrapped by his own deeds. Such is the reality of mortal life. The case of death is severe indeed ; and, by and large, we fail to realise its gravity. Involved as we are in our daily pursuits we seldom hint at death and even when we do, we just bring it in as a piece of conversation. This will not avail us. Instead we ought to clear our hearts from the thought of all other pursuits and think of death as if it were facing us. This

realization can be brought about by recalling how you prepared the funerals of your friends and relatives and bore them on a cot to grave and then interred them in the earth. Imagine their faces, their high stations in life ; and then reflect how earth would have disfigured the beauty of their faces, their bodies would have disintegrated into pieces, how they departed leaving behind their children orphans, their wives widows, and their relatives in mourning. Their goods, their properties, their apparels—all left behind, and then let the realization dawn on you that one day you are inevitably going to meet this doom. How those who lie dead and still to-day used to raise laughters in the company of their friends ! How deeply were they engrossed in the pleasures of the world. They lie in the dust to-day ! How remote the thought of death was from their minds ! They have become its prey now. They were intoxicated by the bubbling passions of their youth ! To-day their hand lies scattered, the foot lies broken ; the worms are eating into their tongue ; their bodies are infested with mite ! How frank was their laugh ! To-day their teeth must have fallen !

What plans had they conceived! How they entertained thought of making provisions for years ahead! And yet death was hovering over their heads. The final day of their lives had come, but they knew not that tonight they would be no more. Such is mine own case. I am busy planning my life to-day. Little do I know what will happen to me tomorrow.

Verse :

No living being knows the time of its end.
Man makes provisions for a hundred years, yet knows not that he might die the next minute.

Now before we proceed to the actual text, let us pray that, tainted with sin and totally engrossed in worldly pursuits as we are, God Almighty by His Eternal Grace may help us to lean on Him alone. And may He grant us the gift of hating this sinful world and may it be His Will that the people of the world should read this book (The Spectacle of Death including Glimpses of Life Beyond the Grave) and act upon it.

In want of your prayers
KHAWAJA MOHAMMAD ISLAM.

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

In the name of Allah the most Gracious most Merciful

The Fearful Sight of Death

Abu Huraira (God bless his soul) narrates that once the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said : "Let me show you the reality of this world." I requested him to do that. He took me to a place of refuse outside Medina. There I saw human skulls and bones sunk in filth with dirty rags scattered all around. Addressing me he said : "These are the human skulls that embodied brains filled with greed. These people were like many amongst you who live today. Like all of you they pinned their hopes on things worldly These skulls are lying without skin and after a few days they will become part of the earth. They struggled hard to eat the spicy dishes only to swallow this filth today. The state in which they exist now cannot be tolerably seen by those who have eyes to see. The very sight of those who enjoyed the fragrance of tasty food makes you hate them. These dirty rags are the substitute for the gaudy dresses that made men proud. Now they are at the mercy of winds which move them the way they like. And these are the bones of those animals that carried human beings only to make them feel proud. Any one can shed a tear or two at their tragic end." Abu

Huraira stated that the tears welled up in his eyes and he wept bitterly.

It is reported in another hadith that Allah's Apostle (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : "The world is captivatingly sweet and rosy in appearance. God created man as His deputy so that he could judge his behaviour. When the Jews, the followers of Moses, rose to power, women, gold and fine dresses became their weakness." Think for yourselves, O friends, have we not fallen victim to the same malady as had befallen the Jews?

Story about King Harun Rashid's Son

King Harun Rashid had a son. He was hardly eighteen and he loved to sit in the company of saints and seers. He frequently visited the graveyards and addressed the dead, saying : "You have already run the course of mortal life. You resigned the world which did not give you peace. Now that you have reached the graves I only wish to know what is happening to you and what questions you have to answer." He was often heard reciting this couplet : I am terrified at the sight of burial processions every day ; and those crying for the dead fill me with grief.

One day he came to his father who was sitting amongst his ministers and courtiers. The king's son had wrapped his body with a piece of coarse cloth and had a turban on his head. "This mad child has degraded the king in the eyes of other kings", whispered the courtiers. They asked the king to admonish his son so that he may reform himself. The king said, "You have really degraded me in the eyes of others, my

son". The boy did not make a reply but addressed a wild bird sitting nearby, saying : "In the name of the Creator I bid you to come and perch on my arm." The bird flew at once and perched itself on his arm. Then he bade that to go back and the bird went back to its place.

Addressing his father, he said : "The way you love this world has in fact made me hang my head in shame and I have decided to part with you". After saying this he left the place. He was carrying a copy of the Holy Qur'an. But shortly before he left his mother gave him a very precious ring so that he might sell it in the hour of dire need and get some money for affording him bread for some time. He bent his steps towards Basra and started working among the labourers. He only worked once a week and made himself live on his one day's earning for eight days. He got a little more than a rupee for his labour and did not claim more than that He spent very little to keep himself alive.

Abu 'Amir Basri says that one of his house walls had collapsed and he was looking for a mason to have it rebuilt. He saw a handsome young man sitting and reading the Holy Qur'an. "Would you work for me?" he asked the boy. "Yes, I will. Men are born to earn by the sweat of their brow. Tell me what can I do for you?" said the boy. Abu 'Amir said : "I want you to work with mortar". The boy said : "I will get a rupee and its sixth part as my daily wage and will not work during the prayer times. Abu 'Amir accepted both these conditions and engaged him. He says that when he learnt after the evening prayers that the

volume of work done by him could not have been accomplished by ten persons, he gave him two rupees more than the stipulated wage. The boy refused to accept the additional money and went away after taking what was agreed upon. The next day, he says, he again started looking for the boy but could not find him. He inquired from various persons if they could tell him anything about the young man. They told him : "The young man works only on Saturday and he can not hire him on any other day." Abu 'Amir says that after judging his work he was so enamoured of the boy that he stopped the construction for a week. On Saturday he again started looking for him. He saw him reading the Holy Qur'an as he had seen him earlier. He greeted him and asked if he would like to work for him again on the basis of the agreed terms. He said : "He will work and thus resumed the task he had discontinued." Wondering at the volume of work done by the boy previously, Abu 'Amir became curious about the method of his work. He hid himself at a place from where he could watch the boy working without being seen by him. He saw to his utter amazement that the boy was pasting mortar on the wall and the stones were automatically arranging themselves in line. Abu 'Amir says that he was convinced that the young man was a saint, because only saints are helped by unknown powers in their work. He says : "In the evening, he gave him three rupees but he refused to accept this wage saying that he did not need the additional money. He took his one rupee and its sixth part and left the place." Abu 'Amir waited for him for another week and on Saturday he started looking for

him again. There was no trace of him. He inquired from various persons and ultimately one man informed him that the young man was lying sick in a jungle. Abu 'Amir offered this man some money for helping him to locate the young man. He agreed to accompany him and they reached the jungle. He saw him lying half conscious on the ground with a piece of brick supporting his head. He greeted him but had no reply. He again addressed him and the young man opened his eyes as if he had recognised him. Abu 'Amir lifted his head a little and placed it in his lap. The young man took exception to this and said : "Don't be deceived by the worldly comforts. Life will soon come to an end and we will part with these comforts. Whenever you see a dead man being led to the grave remind yourself that one day you will also meet your end". Then he addressed Abu 'Amir saying, "When my soul leaves this mortal frame kindly give me a nice bath and bury me after wrapping my body in the clothes I am wearing". Abu 'Amir said : "Why should not I bring a fitting shroud for you?" He said : "The living deserve more to make use of the new clothes." This is exactly what Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique had said when he was about to die. He had said that he should be buried after being wrapped in the clothes he was wearing. The young man said : "Old or new, the shroud has to wear away. What one takes to the other world are his deeds. Give my turban and water pot to the grave digger as his wages and take this ring and the Holy Qur'an to king Harun Rashid. Take every care that you hand over these things to him personally telling him that they were

pledged to you by a wandering boy." He said : "Tell the king that he should beware of dying in ignorance". He said this and his soul left for his heavenly home.

This was the moment, Abu 'Amir says, when he came to know that the young man was a prince. He acted upon his last advice and buried him. He gave both the articles belonging to the young man to the grave digger and took the Holy Qur'an and the ring to Baghdad. When he reached near the king's palace he saw the king coming out with the entourage. Abu 'Amir managed to find a raised platform where he kept standing to watch what was happening around. He saw a big procession of the army comprising of a thousand horsemen. The procession came out one after the other and when the tenth of the series was emerging he saw the king coming out. "For heaven's sake stop and listen to what I say in the name of the Holy Prophet", cried Abu 'Amir. On hearing this the king looked at him. Addressing the king in a hurry he said : "These articles were pledged to me by a wandering boy who had advised me to hand over these to you". The king looked at the articles as if these were familiar to him. After a moment he hung his head down with tears welling up in his eyes. 'Abu Amir says that the king bade a courtier to look after him until his return.

When the king came back to his palace he ordered the curtains to be dropped in his chamber. He said : "Call that man so that I could lighten the burden of my grief." The courtier went to Abu 'Amir and informed him that the king desired his company. He, however, cautioned him that the king was down with

grief and he should economise his words while talking to him. When he was ushered into the king's chamber he saw the king sitting all alone. The king asked him to come near and sit close to him. He asked him what his son used to do. Abu 'Amir told him that he used to earn his livelihood by working with mortar and stones. "Did he work for you ?" he asked. "Yes", he replied. The king said : "Didn't you know that he was closely related to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) (the king happened to be the descendant of Hadrat 'Abbas, the uncle of the Holy Prophet). Abu 'Amir regretted that he did not know anything about the boy when he had met him. It was only after his death that he came to know about his identity. Then the king asked if he (Abu 'Amir) had given the last bath to his son. Abu 'Amir replied in the affirmative. The king touched his hand and held it close to his chest. At this moment he recited these couplets, we give below the translation of these :

My heart begins to melt in memory of the lonely traveller whose last abode is far from me. Nevertheless, his grief fills my heart. Death, no doubt, disturbs the best of our comforts. Dear wanderer, your face was a shining piece of moon that was mounted on your slender silvery neck. The grave swallows the piece of moon, the moon or moon-shine.

Later king Harun Rashid decided to visit the grave of his son. Abu 'Amir accompanied him. When they reached the spot the king recited the following verses :

How I wish to meet the traveller who would

never return ! Death swallowed you too early. You were the light of my eyes and my heart throbbed with your love. Your father will soon taste the cup of death in his old age which you already tasted in your youth. Everyone has to take his cup sooner or later, no matter one lives in a jungle or a city. We cannot but praise God Who has no peer. It is He Who commands our actions.

Abu 'Amir says that after he had said his prayers at night he went to sleep and saw a dream. He says that he saw a fountain of light that transformed itself into a silvery cloud. He saw the face of the young man emerging from the cloud. The boy addressed him saying : "I pray that Allah, the Exalted should compensate you for the good you have done me". Abu 'Amir asked him how he was feeling after bidding goodbye to the mortal world. The boy said that he had been included among the blessed. He said he was enjoying the blessing that no one living could perceive or comprehend.

Hadrat 'Abdullah b. Mas'ud says that those who defy sleep praying the whole night have been promised such things by Almighty Allah as no one has ever heard or seen. According to the Holy Qur'an no one can even dream of the pleasures that are in store for the blessed in the world Hereafter.

The boy told Abu 'Amir in dream that he could have access to the heavenly pleasures if he followed the path that helped him to sever his ties with the worldly existence.

According to another story when someone asked

King Harun Rashid about his son he said : "The boy was born much before I became the king. This boy was well versed in the Holy Qur'an and other branches of knowledge. His mother had given him a precious ring which he could not put to any use and thus returned it before he died. He was very obedient to his mother."

The Holy Prophet on Death

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) says : "The sanest amongst us is the one who can control his baser self and remains attached to things that may prove helpful to one's post existence. One cannot be prepared for anything unless one spends every moment of one's life in contemplating what the process of preparation requires. And anyone who is obsessed with the affairs of this mundane world is leading the life of deception. He is a victim to the worldly temptation and he is forgetful of the day he will die."

God reveals to us in the Holy Qur'an:

> Tell those who are running away from death that one day they will be trapped unaware and produced before the Almighty. They will be called upon to answer for their action by Him Who is All-Knowing.

Dwelling on the theme of death, the religious scholars have identified four categories of persons. Those placed in the first category are the people obsessed with the worldly existence and are unconcerned about death. They are not willing to part with the pleasures of flesh. The very idea of leaving this world makes them sad. Persons belonging to the

second category are those who are God-conscious but cannot reconcile with the idea of death because they think that they are not fully prepared to face death. They are not willing to die because they want to reform their actions and prepare themselves for the final day. The Holy Prophet says that God does not like to meet those who are afraid of meeting Him (meeting God here means accepting death willingly). But the persons described in the second category are not afraid of meeting their Lord. They shirk living the last moment of their life because they find themselves lacking in their preparation for that. So this person cannot like death and he will fall under the category about which the Holy Phophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated that one who does not like to meet God, Allah Almighty too does not like to meet him. This man in fact does not avoid to meet God but fears due to his failings. This man is like the one who wants to make some preparations before meeting with his beloved so that his beloved may be pleased to see him. However, it is necessary that he keeps himself busy in preparation and he has no other pursuit to distract his attention. If this is not the position he is like the former and has absorbed himself in the mundane activities. The third one is a devout. His repentance is perfect. He loves death, and desires it. Nothing can please the lover except his meeting with the beloved. The time of death is the time of meeting. The lover always remembers the time of union. He does not forget it at any time. These are the people who earnestly desire early death. They are anxious for it so that they may get rid of life full of sins.

It has been reported that Hudhaifa (may Allah be pleased with him) was about to die. He said : "Beloved (death) you came at the time of dire necessity. One who feels ashamed will not succeed. O Allah ! You know that I always preferred poverty to affluence and liked illness more than health and loved death more than life. Give me death early so that I meet Thee."

The fourth category which is the best is of those people who have no desire except the pleasure of God Almighty. They do not like either death or life according to their personal desire. They desire the pleasure of God in their love with Allah Almighty. However, the remembrance of death is in all cases a sign of God-consciousness. Death will cut short the comforts of life of one who has absorbed himself in the worldly pursuits and he will avoid these things to some extent. Thus the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The thing (death) which strikes at the root of pleasures of life should be remembered most, *i.e.* with the remembrance of it one should minimize pleasures so that he may return to Allah Almighty. In another tradition the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "If the animals know about death as much as our knowledge is, you will not get any healthy animal for eating. They will pine away because of the fear of death."

'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) if any person could be treated as martyr without sacrificing his life ? The Prophet (peace and blessings

of Allah be upon him) said, "One who remembers death twenty times during a day and night can become a martyr". In another tradition of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) it is laid down that one who recites twenty-five times the following :

اللهم بارک لی فی الموت و فی مابعدالموت

(O Allah ! bless me in death and what follows after death) may get the status of a martyr.

All this is due to the ample remembrance which alienates the love for this world of deceit and prepares him for the next world. The forgetfulness of death absorbs him in the worldly pursuits.

'Ata Kharsani (may Allah bless him) said that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) happened to pass by an assembly wherein the people were laughing loudly. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "You should remember the thing in your meetings which cuts short the pleasures." The Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) asked the Prophet. "What is the thing which hits the pleasures?" The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) replied, "The thing is called death."

In another tradition the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that the death should be remembered much for it ends sins. And yet in another tradition the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "If you come to know that what will be your position after death, you will never eat anything with delight and drink anything with pleasure."

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) instructed a companion (may Allah be pleased with him) that he should remember death amply. It will end your pleasures in other things. It is laid down in another tradition that death should be remembered abundantly. One who reminds himself of death frequently, his heart becomes alive and death becomes easy for him. A companion (may Allah be pleased with him) complained to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he had no love for death. What should he do ? The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Have you any wealth". He replied, "Yes, I have". The Prophet said, "Give it away in the name of Allah". A man loves his wealth, but when he spends it in the name of God, he also wants to go to Him. When he tries to preserve it, he wants to remain with it. It is laid down in another tradition that when two-third of night was over the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah he upon him) said, "Yea people, remember Allah remember Allah, doomsday is drawing near when the horn will be blown and everybody will become the victim of death." It was the habit of 'Umar b. 'Abdul 'Aziz (may Allah bless him) that he used to convene meetings of the learned men daily who discussed about Death, Doomsday and the Day of Judgement. He wept so bitterly on hearing about these as if the funeral was lying before him. Ibrahim Tayami (may Allah bless him) said, "Two things have made me leave every pleasure of the world : One is death and the other is my anxiety to appear before Allah Almighty on the Day of Judgement." Ka'b (may Allah be pleased with

him) said: "Whosoever has recognized death, the hardships of this world will come to an end for him." Ash'ath (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "Whenever we paid a visit to Hasan Basri (may Allah be pleased with him) there was always discussion of Hell and the Day of Judgement." A woman complained to 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) about her hard-heartedness. 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) advised her to remember death frequently which would make her kind hearted. The woman did so and thanked 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) very much for her valuable advice.

Orders of Allah Almighty regarding Death

The angels who have been assigned different tasks are given orders for the whole year in one night that such and such action is to be taken in regard to such and such person. Opinions differ whether these orders are given on *Laila-tul-Qadr* or on *Shab-i-Barat*. Whatever may be the night it has been reported that on this night a list of those who are to die is handed over to the angels. In this material world a person is carelessly engaged in such activities which warrant for his arrest in the heavens. Order for his death is given wherein there is neither any provision for influence nor for an appeal, nor the time fixed for his death can be altered for a minute. Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "All these things *i.e.*, how much subsistence will be given to a person how he will die, who will be born, how much will rain, who will perform Hajj—all these things are copied from Divine tablet on *Laila-tul-Qadr*. In another

tradition Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with them) said: "You will see a man working in the bazaar but his name would be included in the list of those who would die during that year. Abu Naḍra (may Allah bless him) said: "On this night, the tasks required to be performed during the year are assigned to the angels. The good and bad deeds, subsistence and death, hardships, high and low rates of things are prescribed for the whole year."

'Ikrama (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "On *Shab-i-Barat* orders for the year are given and duties are assigned. The lists of dead and those who will perform pilgrimage are handed over to the angels. Neither any addition nor any reduction can be made in it. In a tradition the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) says: "The persons who must die from one Sha'ban to the other Sha'ban, their times of death are given in writing, so much so that a man marries in this world, a child is born to him but his name is included in the list of the dead." 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) says: "The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to fast frequently during the month of Sha'ban since the list of those who have to die during the year is prepared during this month. A man is engaged in getting himself married but his name is recorded amongst the dead. A person is going to perform Hajj but his name is included in the dead."

It has been reported in another tradition that 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) for his fasting much during the month of Sha'ban. The

Prophet replied : "A list of the dead is prepared in this month and he wished that his entry in that list should be made while he was in the state of fasting." It has been reported in another tradition that on the night of the middle of Sha'ban Allah Almighty gives orders to the angel of death regarding the persons who are to die during the year. In another tradition God's Messenger (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said : "The sun rises daily with an announcement that an opportunity is being afforded to you for doing good deeds, for this will never come to you again in your life." Two angels make a declaration from heaven. One of them says : "O Ye who aspire for good deed, make full use of this opportunity." The second one says : "O ye who is doing bad deed, control yourself and desist from doing it." (Do not contribute towards your destruction). Two angels make an announcement. Out of those one says, "O God, reward him who spends money in the cause of Allah." The second says, "O God, one who refrains from spending it, destroy his wealth."

'Ata b. Yasar (may Allah bless him) says that on the night of Sha'ban a list is provided to the angel of death with instructions that he should deprive those of their lives during the year who are included in the list. Here a man is busy in the mundane pursuits of life, he is taken to wedding and is engaged in getting his house constructed whereas his name is included in the list of the dead.

Imam Ghazali says that a humble man even if he remains immune from calamity, hardship, accident, worry, has the fear of death and its agonies haunting

his mind and this makes him indifferent to the worldly pleasures, and it is enough for him to cast away his unmindfulness. The thing is itself so severe that a man should always keep himself busy in its preparation especially when no one knows, when it will come. It is the saying of a learned man that the string is in the hand of another one, no one knows, when he will draw it. Hadrat Luqman (peace be upon him) said to his son : "Death is a thing which no one knows when it will come. Prepare yourself before it comes suddenly." It would very strange if a man given to the worldly pleasures when suddenly comes to know that a constable is on his track and will punish him with five lashes would not abandon the pleasures. The fact is that the very awareness of the fact will spoil all his sensuous delights and comforts that the constable has a warrant of his arrest and that he will apprehend him in a day or two. How sad it is that despite man's conscious of the fact that the angel of death will overpower him sooner or later inflicting upon him the tortures of death and causing him more pain than sustained by the flogging of a thousand whips, remains indifferent to the impending danger. Is it not the extreme end of pride and ignorance ? The crux of the matter is that it is only the sufferer who knows what hardship is accompanied by death. No other person can have any knowledge of it. He may base his knowledge on analogy or may judge to some extent from the condition of the dying person. It is evident that when a dead part of the body is cut off, no pain is felt (just like the dead skin of the body). But when the vital part or limb of the body is chopped or a needle is pricked into it, it

feels intense pain. A limb of the body which sustains injury or is cut off or burns, feels pain because the soul and life have direct relations with each other. It is because of this close relationship that the soul feels the agony of the affected limb. Since soul permeates the whole body and runs in each limb, the affected limb feels pain in proportion to the part of soul permeated in it. How much the pain the whole soul will have to bear at the time of death, one can well imagine. Death draws out the whole soul direct which is spread in each limb of the body. There is no part of the body which feels so much pain as at the time of cutting a limb. The reason why pain is so acutely felt on that occasion is due to the fact that the soul severes its connection with the affected limb. If the limb is lifeless, no pain is felt when it is chopped off. If the mere separation of a part of the soul causes so intense pain, what pain a person will feel when the whole soul will be drawn out from all parts of the body. When a limb of the body is severed, the remaining soul survives in the whole body. As it is strong at that time, the man screams and writhes. If the entire soul is extracted, the man is de-energized and as a result of weakness cannot heave even a sigh of relief. However, if the body is strong, the sound varying with the vigour of the body, is produced out of it at the time when breathing becomes difficult. As soon as the vigour declines, the sound fades away and every limb of the body begins to congeal gradually. Since the soul first of all, leaves the feet and the body is gradually deprived of it, till it leaves the mouth, it is for this reason that at first feet are benumbed and then shanks and thighs are frozen. Similarly, every

limb becomes insensible and suffers pain as much as is undergone when it is cut off. When the soul reaches the throat, eye-sight is lost. It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to pray to God for relieving him of the pangs and agonies of death. His followers also make this supplication but since they are ignorant of the pangs of death, they pray in a casual manner. This is the reason why the Prophets and saints have a dread of death.

Jesus Christ (may peace be upon him) is reported to have said to his apostles to pray for him to the effect that God should relieve him of the agonies of death as the fear of death had brought him close to death. It is said that a group of God-fearing men of Israelites came to a graveyard and after consulting with one another they concurred in praying to God for reviving a dead body in order to enable them to ask him about the agonies of death. They prayed and a dead body was converted into living person with a mark of prostration on his forehead. He told that he had died fifty years ago and had been still feeling the pangs of death.

The Holy Prophet is reported to have said : "O Allah, Thou extract the soul from the sinews and bones and fingers, relieve me from the pangs of death."

According to Hadrat Hasan (may Allah be pleased with him) the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that the pangs of death are as much painful as the wounds received by three hundred swords. Hadrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) used to persuade the fighters in the cause of Allah by saying that if they were not slain in the battlefield, they would die on beds. By

One in Whose Hand is my life the agonies of death are more severe than the suffering caused by the infliction of a thousand strokes of sword.

Haḍrat Auzair (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that the effect of the pangs of death is felt by the dead up to the Day of Resurrection. According to Haḍrat Shaddad b. Aus (mercy be upon him) death is the most severe of all the sufferings experienced during the span of life in this world or the next. It is more sharp than the teeth of saw, more piercing than the edge of the blades of scissors and more torturing than being baked in a cauldron. If the dead rise from the grave and give a description of the pangs of death sustained by them, no person would be able to pass the time comfortably in this world or enjoy a sound sleep.

It is said that when Moses (peace be upon him) died, Almighty God asked him how did he feel the agonies of death. He replied that it seemed to him as if an alive sparrow was being roasted in such a way that its soul lingered in the body and it found no way to escape. He is also reported to have said that his condition was just like an alive goat which was being flayed.

Haḍrat 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) is reported to have said that when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was going to leave this mortal world there was lying near him a cup full of water. He dipped his hand into the cup again and again and then moistened his face, prayed to God for relieving him of the agonies of death. Haḍrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) asked Haḍrat Ka'b (may Allah be pleased with him) to describe the

condition when a man is in the throes of death. He replied: "Commander of the Faithful, the withdrawal of the soul from the body could be compared to the pulling out of a thorny twig after thrusting it into the human body in such a way that the whole body is in the grip of terrible pain."

This is a brief description of agonies of death. Besides this, there is impending dread of the horrible appearance of angel of death and his associates. The form they assume while taking the life of the sinners is so dreadful that even the strongest men cannot endure to see them.

Hadrat Ibrahim (peace be upon him) desired the angel of death to show him the shape he assumed at the time of extracting the soul of the transgressors. The angel of death told him that he would not stand this dreadful sight but Haḍrat Ibrahim (peace be upon him) insisted on that. Then the angel of death requested him to turn his face and so he did. After a moment the angel of death allowed him to see. When Haḍrat Ibrahim (peace be upon him) looked up, he beheld a dark black man (like a ghost) with long and bristled up hair, clad in black apparel, emitting filthy smell, his mouth and nostrils leaping out the flames. No sooner did Hadrat Ibrahim (peace be on him) see the apparition than he fainted. When he regained consciousness after a long time, the angel of death had restored his appearance. At this he said that even if there was no calamity in store for a transgressor, the dreadful appearance of the angel of death was sufficient to cause his death.

This is what falls to the lot of transgressors. But

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when the soul of God-fearing persons is extracted the ang. of death appears in a comely shape. Haḍrat Ibrahim (peace be upon him) also expressed his desire before the angel of death to show him that comely appearance also. He saw before him a very beautiful young man dressed in a precious and immaculate attire and diffusing fragrance. Thereupon Haḍrat Ibrahim (peace be upon him) said : "If all the pleasures are denied to a believer at the time of his death, the appearance of such a comely shape is an adequate compensation for him."

Episode of a King

There was a king who decided to make a tour of his kingdom. He ordered a dress to be brought for him. His order was immediately complied with but he did not like it and instructed to bring another one. At last he selected the best dress. Thereafter three horses were brought before him but he rejected them one by one. At last all the horses were brought and he selected the last one. The accursed satan filled his mind with vanity. He mounted the horse in an ostentatious manner. His retinue and infantry accompanied him but, he out of haughtiness, did not care even to have a look at them. On his way he came across a distressed person dressed in rags. The man saluted the king but he gave him no response. The distressed person seized the bridle of his horse. The king rebuked him for his audacity and ordered to take his hands off from the rein. He told the king that he had business with him. The king ordered him to wait till he got down from the horse, but he told

that he would speak to him just then, and saying that he snatched the bridle. The king permitted him to speak. He told the king that he would express that secretly. The king drew his ear near to him. The man said that he was the angel of death and that he had come to commend his soul to God. As soon as the king heard that, his face turned pale and he started stammering. After a moment the king requested the angel of death to defer the matter and allow him to return home in order to enable him to settle his affairs and meet the members of his family. The angel of death said that he would not allow him time and that the king would not be able to see his home and settle his affairs. On saying that, he extracted his soul from the body. The king fell down from the horse. After that, the angel of death approached a pious Muslim, who was also going on a journey. The angel of death saluted the pious Muslim, who in turn also greeted him. The angel of death informed him that he had to tell him a matter secretly. The pious Muslim lent his ear near to him for the purpose. The angel of death disclosed his identity. The pious man gave him a warm welcome and said that his visit was auspicious for him because he was afflicted by his prolonged separation and added that he was more desirous of meeting him than any other person. The angel of death bade him to accomplish the task which he deemed necessary to finish. He said that he had no longing except that he wanted to meet God. The angel of death asked him to opt for the state in which he wanted to die, so that he could extract his soul in that very state. The man asked the angel of death whether he had been given an

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There was a king who decided to make a tour of his kingdom. He ordered a dress to be brought for him. His order was immediately complied with but he did not like it and instructed to bring another one. At last he selected the best dress. Thereafter three horses were brought before him but he rejected them one by one. At last all the horses were brought and he selected the last one. The accursed satan filled his mind with vanity. He mounted the horse in an ostentatious manner. His retinue and infantry accompanied him but, he out of haughtiness, did not care even to have a look at them. On his way he came across a distressed person dressed in rags. The man saluted the king but he gave him no response. The distressed person seized the bridle of his horse. The king rebuked him for his audacity and ordered to take his hands off from the rein. He told the king that he had business with him. The king ordered him to wait till he got down from the horse, but he told

that he would speak to him just then, and saying that he snatched the bridle. The king permitted him to speak. He told the king that he would express that secretly. The king drew his ear near to him. The man said that he was the angel of death and that he had come to commend his soul to God. As soon as the king heard that, his face turned pale and he started stammering. After a moment the king requested the angel of death to defer the matter and allow him to return home in order to enable him to settle his affairs and meet the members of his family. The angel of death said that he would not allow him time and that the king would not be able to see his home and settle his affairs. On saying that, he extracted his soul from the body. The king fell down from the horse. After that, the angel of death approached a pious Muslim, who was also going on a journey. The angel of death saluted the pious Muslim, who in turn also greeted him. The angel of death informed him that he had to tell him a matter secretly. The pious Muslim lent his ear near to him for the purpose. The angel of death disclosed his identity. The pious man gave him a warm welcome and said that his visit was auspicious for him because he was afflicted by his prolonged separation and added that he was more desirous of meeting him than any other person. The angel of death bade him to accomplish the task which he deemed necessary to finish. He said that he had no longing except that he wanted to meet God. The angel of death asked him to opt for the state in which he wanted to die, so that he could extract his soul in that very state. The man asked the angel of death whether he had been given an

authority to that effect. The angel of death told him that he had been ordered to show respect to his desire. The man requested the angel of death to allow him to offer prayer after performing ablution and added that he should extract his soul at the time when he would be in a state of prostration. When he knelt down in prayer the angel of death extracted his soul.

Episode of a Wealthy Man

There was a man who had accumulated huge wealth and there was left nothing which he had not purchased. He got constructed a magnificent palace which had the doors, where he posted guards. After the construction of the house, he arranged a feast and invited all his relations and friends. He sat on a cosy and fine bed crossing his legs. When the guests were busy in their meal, he was saying to himself that he had collected all sorts of things and there was left no need to buy anything for years to come. Hardly had he thought of it, when a beggar dressed in rags and a bowl slung round his neck came outside and began to knock at the door violently. When the servants heard the noise, they ran out to see the foolish intruder. They asked him what the matter was? The beggar said to them to send their master. The servants wondered if their master would like to meet him. He assured them that master would come out. They came back and narrated the whole story to their master who said that they should have given a lesson to the beggar. In the meantime the beggar again started knocking at the door violently. The guards ran and reached the door. The beggar asked the servants to tell their master that he was the angel of death. On hearing that, they were

confounded and conveyed the message to their master. He also lost his senses and said in a humble tone that they should request the angel of death to substitute another person in his place. Meanwhile, the beggar entered into the house and told the wealthy man to do whatever he liked because he could not return without extracting his soul. He heaped all things at one place and cursing them said that his indulgence in those riches had prevented him from offering prayers and he could not spare time to remember God with full devotion. The Almighty God gave those riches the power of speech who said : "Why do you curse us. It was due to us that you could have an access to the kings at a time when the pious were driven out. It was because of us that you derived sexual pleasures from the beautiful women and led your life like a king."

O rich man ! you employed us in the cause of evil, and we stood not in your way. Had you spent us in the cause of good we would have helped you in that noble cause also.

Episode of a Cruel Man

Wahb b. Munnbih (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that once the angel of death was on his way to take the life of a cruel man who had been extremely merciless. He met the angel who admitted that he had taken lives of many persons. Wahb asked the angel of death whether he had ever felt pity for his victims. He told them that on one occasion he was filled with compassion for a woman who lived alone in a jungle. He was ordered to extract her soul at the time when she had given birth to a

child. He was overpowered by the feeling of pity for that woman and her child and felt agitated as what would become of the lonely child in the desolate jungle. The angels told him that the cruel man whose soul he had to extract was the same child. The angel of death was astonished to hear the news and glorified Allah and hymned His praise and lauded His power.

Statement of Hadraf Hasan Basri on Death

Hadrat Hasan Basri (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that when a person dies and the members of his family start weeping, the angel of death stands at the door of the house and says that he has not deprived the dead person of his livelihood. So long he had to benefit himself out of his subsistence, he did. He has not cut the span of his life short. He is bound to visit the house again and again till all the members of the household would taste the cup of death. Hadrat Hasan (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have sworn to the effect that if the members of the bereaved family could have a look at the angel of death and hear him, they would have forgotten the dead body and turned to their own-selves.

Episode of a Cruel Israelite

Yazid Raqqashi (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that one of the cruel Israelites was cohabiting with his wife in his own house when he saw a stranger entering the house. He flew into rage and stepped towards him. He asked him who he was and by whose permission he had entered the

house. The stranger replied that he had entered there with the permission of the owner of the house and added that no barrier could obstruct his way. He even did not consider it necessary to seek permission at the time of meeting the kings. He was neither afraid of the dread of a cruel man nor anything could hinder him from approaching the arrogant and the haughty. As soon as the cruel man heard the stranger, he was terrified, started trembling and fell upon the ground prostrate. Thereafter he said that he was beyond all doubt, the angel of death, which the stranger admitted. Then the owner of the house requested the angel of death to allow him time in order to enable him to make a will. The angel told him that the time for making a will had lapsed and that his days were numbered. He further told that the appointed time of his death had approached which did not admit of any delay. The owner asked the angel of death where would he lead him. The angel of death told him that he would lead him to his own deeds (just as he has done the deeds, so shall he find his place). His place in the next world would be determined on the basis of deeds done by him in the world. The cruel man told the angel of death that he had done no good deeds and had made no preparation for the next world. Whereupon the angel of death informed him that he would lead him to (A reference is made to a verse of Surah لظیٰ لزاعۃ للشوی Ma'arij, the translation of which is) "But nay! for lo! it is the fire of hell, eager to roast. It calls him who turned and fled (from truth)". Soon after that the angel of death extracted the soul of the cruel man. As soon he died, the members of his family bemoaned and

child. He was overpowered by the feeling of pity for that woman and her child and felt agitated as what would become of the lonely child in the desolate jungle. The angels told him that the cruel man whose soul he had to extract was the same child. The angel of death was astonished to hear the news and glorified Allah and hymned His praise and lauded His power.

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lamented. Some of them were weeping and others were crying. Yazid Raqqashi (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said : "If the people should know about the pangs of death which the dead man has to undergo, they would begin to lament over the pangs of death to be sustained by him rather than his actual death."

Episode concerning the Death of God-fearing Persons

Hadrat Sufyan Thauri (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that when the angel of death touches the artery of the heart of a person, he is deprived of perception, he becomes mute and forgets everything belonging to this world. The pangs of death are so severe that if a person is not overwhelmed by the hypnotic influence of death he is likely to bite those who would come to his grip. According to some traditions, when breath of a person reaches the throat, satan tries his best to lead him astray.

According to a tradition the angel of death keeps the persons under observation at the time they say their prayers. If he finds someone observe punctuality in saying his prayers, he instructs him before his death to recite "There is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and His prophet", and thereby removes satan away from him.

Mujahid (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that when a person is at death's door, the faces of his companions are brought before him. If he had association with pious men, they are conjured before him and if he had association with transgressors,

the same are shown to him. Hadrat Yazid b. Shajara (may Allah be pleased with him) is also reported to have said the same thing.

Rabi'a b. Bazah (mercy of Allah be upon him) who was a God-fearing man of Basra, is reported to have said that a man who was at death's door, was instructed by the people to recite : "There is no god but Allah," but he continued to mutter repeatedly "drink and let me drink a cup of wine". Similarly, there was a man in Ahwaz, who when he was about to die, was advised by the people to say : "There is no god but Allah" but he continued counting coins only.

On the contrary, those persons who made preparations for death, remembered it during their lifetime and performed good deeds, for them, death was like a gift as told by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). When Hadrat Bilal (blessings of Allah be upon him) was on the verge of death, his wife was aggrieved to learn that he was parting company with her but at the same time she expressed delight to think that Bilal would meet Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his noble companions (may Allah be pleased with all of them).

Hadrat Mu'adh (Allah be pleased with him) when he was leaving for his heavenly home he is reported to have prayed to God for prolonging his life in the world not because he had a love for it or intended to dig canals and plant gardens but because of the fact that he had a longing for deriving pleasure from that thirst which he would feel in the noon of hot season as a result of keeping fast, and wanted to devote his time to the

religious preaching and move in those circles only wherein Allah was remembered much.

Hadrat Salman (blessings of Allah be upon him) is reported to have wept at the time of his death. Someone wanted to know the reason of his weeping at a time when he expected to meet the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who had died being well-pleased with him. He stated that he had wept not because he was afraid of death or was worried over severing connections with the world but because of the fact that he had made a covenant with the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he would benefit from the world like a wayfarer only and he was sorry that he could not honour his pledge. On his death, it was noticed that his property was a bit more than the value of ten dirhams. It was that excess which had made him weep. After that he ordered a small quantity of musk to be brought to him and said to his wife to dissolve it and sprinkle it on his bed because a group of living beings was coming to him which constituted neither of human-beings nor of jinns. Hadrat 'Abdullah b. Mubarak (may Allah be pleased with him) started laughing at the time of his death and said that one should do something for the attainment of such and such objects (he might have visualised the delights of the next world). He is also reported to have said to his servant Nasr at the time of his death to place his head on the ground. The servant began to weep. He asked the servant the reason of his weeping. The servant told that he had lived a comfortable life but was dying like a beggar. He ordered the servant to keep

silent and informed him that he had prayed Allah that He should cause him to live like rich persons but die as beggars.

'Ata b. Yasar (may Allah have mercy upon him) says: A man was about to die. Satan came to him and said: You escaped me—you did not come under my clutches. He told him: I do not feel secure from you.

Jariri (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: "I was sitting beside Hadrat Junaid at the time of his death. He was reciting the Holy Qur'an." Some one said: "It is an awful moment. This time is not fit for reading the Holy Book. He asked: Will there be any better time for me for reading the Holy Qur'an than the present moment—the moment when the last entry is going to be made in any scroll."

Someone told Hadrat Junaid (may God show mercy to him) that Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khazaz seemed to be in a very happy mood at the time of his death. "What was the matter?" It was inquired of him. He told him: "Had he, at that moment, courted death in a state of happiness it would have been delightful for him."

When Hadrat Zunun Misri (may God show mercy to him) was dying, somebody asked him: "Do you wish to say something? Have you any desire to express?" He told: "I crave only for one thing and that is to know Allah before I die."

A person says that he was sitting with Mumshad Danuri (may God show mercy to him) that a beggar came there and said: "Is there a clean and holy place to die?" He made a sign towards a place nearby where a fountain was also playing. The man went

to that place, and performed ablution and then prayed. After that, he slept at ease and died.

Fatima, the daughter of Abu 'Ali Roudbari (may God show mercy to him) said: "When his brother was dying, his head was in her lap. He opened his eyes and said: 'The doors of the heavens are opened and the paradise is decorated, and a voice is being heard: O Abu 'Ali! although you were not ambitious for such an elevated place, but We have bestowed upon you a place of great honour'" After that he recited two verses, the translation of which is given below :

> By God! I have never cared to fall in love with anyone else save Thee. I am experiencing that Thou art making me anxious by Thine indisposed eyes and also by Thine cheeks seeming to be red due to extreme modesty.

Story of an Idolator

Abdul Wahid b. Zaid (mercy be upon him) who belonged to a lineage of saints of Chishtia, said : "We were once sailing in a boat. A whirl wind sailed away our boat to an island where we saw a man busy in adoring an idol. We asked him to whom he was worshipping. He made a sign towards that idol. We told him that his god was carved by his own hands but, on the contrary, God whom we worship creates all such things Himself. As such, he who is made by our own hands, is not worthy to be adored." He asked us to whom did we worship. We told him : "We worship that Exalted God who liveth in the Empyrean (the highest heaven). He is the Absolute Authority to control the earth. All other beings are overshadowed

by His Magnificence and Greatness." He asked us as to how we comprehend that Glorious God. We told him : "He sent His Messenger (the Holy Prophet) who was very merciful and kind. That Messenger of God (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) revealed to us all these things." He then asked us to let him know the dwelling of that prophet of God. We told him that, when he had conveyed to us the message of God (completed his mission) and thus rendered Him His due, his Lord called him back so as to bless him with His infinite reward in heaven. He then asked us : "Had that Messenger of God left behind a thing for our guidance?" We told him that he left behind him a Holy Book of God (Qur'an) for our guidance. He asked us to show him that Book. We offered him the Holy Qur'an. He told that he was illiterate and, as such, a bit of it be read out to him. He kept on weeping during the course of its recital till it was completely read out to him. He said : "It is only the Revealer of this Holy Book Whom we must obey." After this, he became a Muslim. We then acquainted him with the fundamentals of Islam and the Commandments of the Almighty God. The meanings of some surahs of the Holy Qur'an were also explained to him. When, after the performance of the prayer of the first watch of the night, we went to bed, he said : "Does Allah slumber at night." We told him that our Exalted God is Everliving and Everlasting. Neither does He slumber nor does he nod. He said : "How disobedient slaves you are ! Your Lord keeps on waking, whereas you sleep?" On hearing this, we were struck with astonishment. When we were about to return from that island,

he begged us to take him along with us so as to enable him to learn the teachings of Islam. We took him with us. On reaching the city of 'Aabadan, says Abdul Wahid, I said to my companions: "This man is a new Muslim, hence we should provide him with some livelihood also." Some dirhams were, therefore, subscribed by us but, when we were handing over these dirhams to him, he said : "What is this?" We told him : "These are some dirhams for your expenditure." He said: "There is no god but Allah. You have shown to me the path which, I see, is not being followed by you. I was in an island where I worshipped an idol. I did not even worship the Majestic Lord. Even in that condition, He neither destroyed me nor killed me in spite of the fact that I had no awareness of Him and so I did not worship Him." After three days, we were told that he was about to breathe his last. We went to him and asked if there were any need of his to be satisfied. He apprised us that Exalted God Who had caused them to visit the island for his guidance, had satisfied all his requirements. Abdul Wahid (mercy be upon him) says: "I was, all of a sudden, overcome by sleep and hence slept there. While sleeping, I saw a very fertile garden wherein was a very fine vault ; a throne spread out and occupied by a very handsome girl—such a beautiful girl the like of whom I had never seen before. She was saying : 'By God ! Despatch him soon.' By seeing such an anxiety of her, my agitation of mind increased manifold." He further says : "When I woke up, the new Muslim had breathed his last. We managed for burial and buried him." Again at night, says Abdul Wahid (mercy be upon him), I witnessed the same

garden, the same vault and the same girl sitting beside the new Muslim (who had now died) who was reciting a Qur'anic verse, the translation of which is : "And the angels visit them from each door and send them their compliments—a glad tidings for peace and safety against each kind of misfortune. All this is the fruit of your contentment (and steadfastness for the religion of Islam). There is, therefore, a good reward for you in the Hereafter." These are the signs of God's Endowment, Beneficence and Forgiveness that all his life, he remained an idolator but, near death, he got God's blessing that He caused these people to sail to the island by making their boat in which they were sailing uncontrollable and thus blessed him with glory of the Hereafter :

> "O Master of the worlds ! Whom Thou giveth something, nobody can withhold it from him and Whom Thou giveth not, no one can confer upon him".

Story of a Slave Girl

Once upon a time, Hadrat Malik b. Dinar (mercy be upon him) was walking in the streets of Basra. On the way, he happened to see a female servant walking with such pomp and show as the maidservants of kings generally do. Hadrat Malik (mercy be upon him) after witnessing the manner in which she walked, called her and said: "O handmaid! Would your master like to sell you." She was surprised to hear this voice. She said : "What? Repeat it again." Hadrat Malik did accordingly. She said to him : "Would a beggar like you, be able to purchase me if master agrees to sell at all?" He

replied in the affirmative and added that he could purchase a better one than she. On hearing this reply she laughed and ordered her servants to take this beggar along with them (just for making fun of him). The servants obeyed her orders accordingly. On reaching home she narrated all this story to her master, who too laughed boisterously and ordered to bring him (Hadrat Malik) before him. When he was brought before him, he (the master) was invested with fear and asked him : "What do you want?" In reply, he advised him to sell his handmaid to him. He asked him : "Can you pay her price?" Hadrat Malik replied : "For me, her price is not more than two stones of dates." On hearing this the whole audience began to laugh. The master asked him : "What prompted you to fix this price for her?" He replied that there were many shortcomings in her. The master asked him to let him know those shortcomings. Hadrat Malik enumerated them thus :

In case she applies not perfume, her body emits a foul smell. If she cleanses not her teeth, these begin to putrefy. If she combs not her hair, the dishevelled and untidy hair are infested with lice. She, on becoming a bit old, would bear the appearance of an old woman, not worthy to be loved. She menstruates. She makes water and relieves herself. In other words she emits all sort of filths (spittle, mucus, saliva.) She suffers from agonies and hardships. She, being much greedy, shows her love to you merely for her self-interests. She shows her love to you only for her material benefits. Today, if any loss is incurred by her because of you, the whole edifice of her love will within no time, be crumbled down. She is absolutely

faithless and fulfils not her promise. Her love is based on falsehood. As soon as you breathe your last, she will sit by the side of another person and sing the song of her permanent and everlasting love for him, in the same way as she did for you. On the contrary said Hadrat Malik (mercy he upon him). I have a handmaid thousand times better than your handmaid. Her price is much less than her's. She is made of camphor's essence. She has been fashioned out of musk and saffron. She is covered by pearls and light. If her spittle is caste in saltish water, it will become sweet. In case she speaks to a dead man, he will be restored life. If her wrist is shown to the sun, it will suffer darkness and eclipse. If she visits a place of darkness, it will begin to illuminate. If she happens to appear in the world with all her elegance, the whole world will become fragrant. She is brought up in the gardens of musk and saffron. She has played amidst the branches of ruby and coral (a small pearl). Her abode is a place of great blessings. She drinks water from Tasnim (a fountain in the paradise). She never backs out to her words. Her love is constant. Hadrat Malik (mercy be upon him) then asked the master to let him know what handmaid is, according to price, more beneficial to him. All said unanimously that that handmaid had been more valuable about whom Hadrat Malik (mercy be upon him) had told them. He added: "Every one can afford to buy her at any time and in every age". The people asked Hadrat Malik to tell them her price. He told them : "If they want to purchase such an important and valuable thing, they will have to spare some time at night and observe two raka's of

Tahajjud prayer in order to seek the pleasure of Almighty God ; they shall have to invite some poor and the needy to meals at the time of eating ; they shall have to give preference to Allah's pleasure to their own wishes ; they shall have to remove away any troublesome thing lying in the way; they shall have to lead simple lives and they will have to be more anxious for their eternal abode than this mortal world." Then Hadrat Malik (mercy be upon him) told them that if they would act upon this advice, they would lead an honourable life and would be blessed with honour and veneration in the Hereafter and would abide in the paradise (a place of great blessings) under the shadow of Almighty God. After that the master asked the maid-servant whether she had listened to the advice of the venerable old man. If so, what was her opinion. She told that the preachings of the venerable old man were true and were calculated to promote good and virtue. The master set the maid-servant free and gave her a portion of his property as a gift. He also set his slaves free and bestowed upon them some property. He donated his house and all its belongings for the welfare of the poor. After casting off his elegant dress giving it to the poor, he covered his body with a thick cloth of a door's curtain. The maid-servant told her master that she could not live without him. After sacrificing her elegant dress and her property for the welfare of the poor, she also accompanied her master. Malik b. Dinar (mercy of Allah be upon him) prayed for them and departed. Both of them bade farewell to the worldly pleasures and dedicated themselves to the divine worship and died in that very

state. (May Allah bless them and all of us).

Episode of a Young Man

Ja'far b. Sulaiman (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that one day he was going with Hadrat Malik b. Dinar (mercy of Allah be upon him) in Basra. They happened to pass by a grand building which was being constructed and a young man who was standing there, was giving directions to the masons in regard to the construction of that lofty edifice. Malik b. Dinar (mercy of Allah be upon him) was impressed by the beautiful young man. He pitied him as was involving himself in a useless affair and said: How much is he engrossed in the construction work. He disclosed that he wished to pray to God for disentangling the young man from that snare so as to convert him into a true devout. He wished that he should find place in paradise. He proposed to meet the young man. Ja'far (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that they both went to meet the young man. They greeted him and he reciprocated. He was well-acquainted with Malik (mercy of Allah be upon him) but the young man did not recognise him. After a short time he, however, recognised and held him in reverence and said what had brought him there. Malik (mercy of Allah be upon him) asked him how much he intended to spend on the construction of the building. The young man told that he intended to spend to the tune of one lakh of dirhams. Malik (mercy of Allah be upon him) said that he should give him one lakh dirhams, he would take it on himself to provide him with an abode in paradise which would be far better

than the building he had been constructing on the earth. In his heavenly abode he would contain a train of attendants. There would be pavilions and cupolas made of red ruby studded with pearls. Its clay would be made of saffron and its mortar would be made of musk which would cause to diffuse fragrance. It would neither grow old nor there would be any danger of its collapse. It would be constructed not by means but by the command of the Almighty. The young man requested him to allow him time to think over it and told him to come early the next day when he would give him a definite reply. Hadrat Malik (mercy of Allah be upon him) returned and thought of the young man all night. In the mid-night he earnestly prayed for the young man. At dawn they both called at his house. The young man had already been waiting for them outside his house. He was immensely pleased to see Hadrat Malik (mercy of Allah be upon him). The latter asked the young man what decision he had taken in the matter. The young man enquired as to whether he would keep his promise. Hadrat Malik (mercy of Allah be upon him) assured him that he would do so. The young man brought the bags full of dirhams and put them before him. He also brought a pen. Hadrat Malik (mercy of Allah be upon him) took a paper and wrote on it: "In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful". Then he made an agreement to the effect that "Malik b. Dinar had taken the responsibility for providing the young man with an abode in paradise in the neighbourhood of the Almighty in lieu of the present palace and that the aforesaid palace would have not only all the amenities (which have been

mentioned above and which were again repeated in the agreement) but also some extra amenities. After executing the agreement, he handed it over to young man and taking one lakh of dirhams, went away. Ja'far (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that in the evening he had not even so much money with which he could buy the food even for a single time. Forty days had hardly lapsed after that incident, when one day Hadrat Malik (mercy of Allah be upon him) after saying his morning prayers, saw a paper in the arch of the mosque. That was the same agreement which had been executed by him with the young man. On the back of the page, it was written (but no ink appeared to have been used) to the effect that it was the fulfilment of the responsibility taken by Malik b. Dinar and his promise which he had made with the young man. It had been fulfilled completely and seventy times better than those terms. Hadrat Malik (mercy of Allah be upon him) was astonished to read that paper.

Story of Musa b. Mohammad b. Sulaiman Al-Hashmi

Musa b. Sima'k (mercy be upon him) says that Musa b. Mohammad b. Sulaiman Al-Hashmi was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. He was taken to the sensuous pleasures of life. The handsome boys and girls always absorbed his attention. He had neither any grief nor any anxiety to disturb him. He himself was the most beautiful man, handsome like a moon. He had all the amenties of life for him. His annual income was three lakhs and three thousand dinars annually

which was entirely spent on his swank living. He had a high balcony, with many windows opening towards the thorough-fare, through which he could see the people moving to and fro. And on the other side of his castle there were also many windows opening towards a garden through which he could enjoy the fragrance of the flowers. There was built a vault made of elephant's tusks fixed with silver's nails and studded with a sheet of jewels. And that Hashmi had put on a turban on his head embellished with jewels. His friends and relatives were always seen gathered in that vault. The servants kept themselves standing behind them respectfully. In the front, there was always a troupe of female dancers and singers. Whenever he had a desire to listen to the songs, he used to cast a look at the guitar and all presented themselves before him, and when he desired to stop it, he did that by the gesture of his hand and the festivity came to an end. This state of affairs continued late at night till he was overwhelmed by sleep. When he, under the effect of intoxication, became senseless and his companions also went away, he caught any of the girls whom he liked and committed fornication with her the whole night. At dawn, he became busy in playing chess and *chausar*. Sorrow and anxiety, and death and sickness of any human being had no effect on him. He only knew merriment and laughter. Each day the new scents which were available at any place in that age, were brought to him. Excellent bouquets of sweet-fragrant flowers were presented to him. In this state, he spent his twenty-seven years. At one night, he was in his apartment busy in enjoyments that he suddenly heard a very

sweet voice which was quite different from that of his singers, but it was very fascinating. No sooner did he hear that voice than he began to feel uneasy. He ordered his singing girls to stop singing, and began to hear that voice by stretching out his head outside the window of his room. For some moments that voice remained audible and then stopped. He ordered his servants to bring the man before him whose voice he had been hearing. The cups of wine were rotating in the company. The servants ran out hurriedly in the direction whence the voice was coming and entered into a mosque, where they found a young man standing in a corner of the mosque and talking to his Lord. He was pale and weak. His neck was slender ; his lips dry. His hair were dirty and his belly pressed in. He had put on two sheets of a cloth, which hardly covered his body. These people caught hold of him and nothing was said or told to him. Within no time, they removed him from the mosque and produced him before that Hashmi who was sitting in that balcony and they said : "Here is he, Sir." He, being under the influence of wine, said : "Who is he ?" They begged and told him : "He is that man the voice of whom you had heard." He asked them : "From which place you have brought him here ?" They told him that he was in a mosque. He was standing and reciting the Holy Qur'an. That rich man asked the young saint : "What were you reciting?" He said : "A'auzobillah" and then recited some verses of the Holy Qur'an from Surah at-Tatfif (Defrauding), the translation of which is given below :

"Lo ! the righteous verily are in delight, on

couches, gazing. Thou wilt know in their face the radiance of delight. They are given to drinking of pure wine which is sealed. Whose seal is musk—For this let (all) those strive for bliss—And mixed with water of Tasnim, a spring whence those brought near to Allah drink".

Thus, those who are jealous of others' fortune, should be greedy for such things (and be anixous to get more blessings by good deeds and, as such, we should vie with each other in those deeds by which we can be favoured with these blessings). And that wine will be mixed with the water of Tasnim (if something is mixed with wine, its potency is increased) and that Tasnim is a spring in the Heaven whence those brought near to Allah drink. Those who are near to Allah, will get pure water from this spring and some water will be mixed from this spring with the wine to be given to pious men).

After this, the poor young man said: "O you who are deceived: Your palace, this high balcony and carpets! these have no comparison with them whatsoever."

Those are raised couches upon which carpets are spread. Those are very high couches. (The Event-1). Their couches are lined with silk brocade. (The Beneficent-3). Those people are reclining on green cushions and fair carpets. (The Beneficent-3). The friend of Allah, sitting on these couches will see two such ever bubbling springs which will be playing between two gardens. (The Beneficent-3). In these two gardens, there is every kind of fruit in pairs. Every kind of fruit will have two different tastes.

(The Beneficent-3). Those fruits will neither be perishing nor there will be any restriction for plucking them (as we are prohibited to pluck them in the world by the gardener) (The Event-1). These people will be in a blissful state in a high garden. (The Reality-1). They will be in such a high garden where they hear no idle speech; wherein is a gushing spring; wherein are couches raised; and goblets set at hand; and cushions ranged; and silken carpets spread. (The Overwhelming). Those people are amid shade and fountains. (The Emissaries-2) The fruits of its Garden are everlasting, and its shade also; this is the reward of those who keep their duty, while the reward of disbelievers is the Fire. (The Thunder-5). How much painful that fire will be. (May God protect us from that). Lo! the guilty are immortal in hell's torment. It is not relaxed for them, and they despair therein. (Ornaments of Gold-6). Lo! the guilty are in error and madness. On the day when they are dragged into the Fire upon their faces (it is said unto them) Feel the touch of hell. (The Moon-3). Those people will be in fire, in boiling water and shadow of black smoke (The Event-1). The guilty man will long to rescue himself from the punishment of that day at the even price of his children, and his spouse and his brother, and his kin that harboured him, and all that are in the earth, if then it might deliver him. But nay for lo! it is the fire of hell, eager to roast! it calleth him who turned and fled (from truth); and hoarded (wealth) and withheld it. (The Ascending Stairways).

Such a man will be in a great torture and in a painful doom; he will be a victim of Almighty God's

anger; he will be in everlasting doom.

In this discourse, the young pious man has alluded to numerous verses of the Holy Qur'an, relating to Heaven and Hell, and has also made references to Surahs of the Holy Qur'an from where these have been quoted.

On listening to the discourse of the young pious man, the rich Hashmi stood up from his seat and embraced him and began to weep loudly. He said to all his companions to go away and then took the young saint with him in the courtyard and sat on a rough mat; there he lamented over his youth and kept on weeping for his past state of affairs and the young saint was busy in imparting lessons to him till it was dawn. In the first instance, he repented for his sins in the presence of the young saint and made a solemn pledge before Almighty God for not committing any sin in future. For the second time, he repented for his sins during day time before the whole gathering. He made a sincere repentance and then took to worship of Almighty God in a corner of the mosque. He sold all his belongings and all his goods and spent their proceeds on the welfare of the public. He dismissed all his servants. He returned all those things, which he had appropriated unjustly to the real owners of them. He freed most of the servants and handmaids, and most of them were sold by him and their price spent in the welfare of the public. He put on rough clothes. He began to eat barley bread. The whole night he worshipped God and during the day, kept fast. At last, the saint and pious people began to visit him. He showed such keenness in the worship

of God that people begged him to take pity on himself and not to burden his being with an unbearable burden. He instructed him that Almighty God is the most Beneficent and giveth a great reward for a little effort. But he used to say: "O friends! Only I know in what position I am. I disobeyed my God day and night. I committed many a major and minor sins." After saying this, he kept on weeping and wept bitterly. In this condition, he walked towards Mecca bare-footed for the performance of Pilgrimage (Hajj). He had put on a thick cloth on his body. He had with him one bowl and a bag only. In this condition, he reached Mecca and after the performance of Hajj, he stayed there till the end of his life (may mercy be upon him) During his stay at Mecca, he went in 'Hatim' and wept vehemently, implored humbly and earnestly and used to say: "O my Lord! I have passed many of my solitudes but never cared about Thee. I annoyed Thee with horrible sins. My Lord ! I have lost all my goods. (I have gained nothing). There is a burden of sins upon me now. There will be destruction for me on the day (The Day of Judgement) when I will be meeting with Thee. In other words, there is ruin upon ruin for me, that is, a great destruction on the day when my scroll will be opened before me. Ah ! That will be filled with wicked deeds and sins committed by me, but ruin has befallen me because of Thine anger and Thine anger is a destruction for me which is due to my defiant attitude towards Thee and for misusing the favours and blessings Thou showered upon me. And Thou were seeing all this disobedience of mine. O my Lord ! There is no place

for shelter for me, except Thee, where I may find escape. There is none save Thee to beseech. There is none save Thee to trust in. My Lord ! I am not in a position to pray Thee for heaven but I pray Thee in the name of Thy Kindness, Forgiveness and Thy Grace to take pity on me and forgive me my sins."

"These are the people who are near to Allah and who are forgiven".

Haḍrat Malik b. Dinar (mercy be upon him) says : "I was on my way to Mecca for the performance of Hajj when I saw a young boy walking on foot. He had neither any conveyance, nor provision for the journey, nor water. I paid him salutations which he readily responded." I said : "O young boy whence are you coming ?" He told me : "From Him (God)." I again asked him about his destination, to which he replied that he was returning to God. I asked him : "Where is your provision for the journey?" He told : "This is upto Him (God) to provide me that." I told him : "It is impossible to cover this journey without provision of meal and water. Don't you have something with you ?" The young boy replied : "I had, at the outset of my journey, some words as the provision for journey." I asked him : "Which are those five words?" He told me : "These are : Ka'f-ha'-ya'-ain-s —the holy commandments of Almighty God." He further explained the meanings of these five words as under :—

(1) Ka'f——The Sufficient ;
(2) Ha' ——The Guide ;
(3) Ya' ——The Protector ;
(4) 'Ain——Knower of all things; and

(5) S ——The True—True to his promise.

Thus a man, the companion of whom is One Who is Sufficient, the unerring Guide, the Protector, the Knower of all things and the True (True to His words), can ever be ruined or entertain any fear ? Can such a person bother for the carriage of any provision and water during the course of his journey ? Haḍrat Malik (mercy be upon him) says : "I wanted to give the young boy my shirt but he refused to take it and said : 'O aged man ! Is it not better to bc bare than to get a shirt' ? He further said : 'In the Hereafter, we will be answerable for the permissible things of the world and will have to suffer punishment for the forbidden things of the world'." When the darkness of night spread over, the young boy turned his face towards the sky and prayed to Allah Who is pleased when His bondsmen obey Him, and suffers no loss if His bondsmen disobey Him, by uttering these words: "O God ! Favour me with that thing by which Thou art pleased, that is, Obedience, and forgive me that thing which causeth Thou no loss, that is Sin." After this, the people put on their 'Ihram' (pilgrims dress) and began to recite the words : "Here I am to do Thy bidding my Lord !" But the young boy was silent. I asked him : Why don't you declare : "Here I am to do Thy bidding my Lord!" He told : "I fear if I say : Here I am to do Thy bidding my Lord" ; the reply may be : "I neither hear your talk nor pay any attention towards you". Then he went away. After this, he was not seen during the journey. At last, he was seen in *Mina* where he recited some poetic verses, the

translation of which is given as under :—

"The Beloved, Who is keen to shed my blood, has every right to shed my blood in haram or outside haram. By God! If my soul comes to know with Whom it is related, it may stand headlong instead on foot. O censurer ! Do not censure me for being entangled in His love. If you happen to see, what I am seeing, you never dare to talk like this. The people make a circuit of the holy Ka'ba bodily and, if they make a circuit of Exalted God, there will be no need for them of the '*Haram*'. On the day of 'Id the people sacrificed sheep and goats in the way of Allah but the lover of Allah sacrificed his life in His way. The people have performed the Hajj but my Hajj is that I have been able to get tranquillity. The people have sacrificed sheep and goats but I sacrifice my blood and soul. After this, he prayed: 'O God ! The people have gained access to Thee by sacrifices. I have nothing to sacrifice save my soul. I offer it to Thee for acceptance'."

Thereupon he screamed and fell down as dead. After this incident, a hidden voice was heard: "He is the companion of Allah. He is a martyr in the cause of Allah."

Hadrat Malik (mercy be upon him) says : "I performed the burial of the young boy and remained anxious and thoughtful about him the whole night. In the meantime, I fell asleep and saw him in the dream." I asked him : ' What had happened to you?" He told: "As had happened with the martyrs of Badr."

The Story of a Boy

A saint says: "Once I set out on a journey for Hajj in the most sweltering heat of summer. The hot wind was blowing violently. The day I reached the centre of Hejaz, I was, by chance, separated from the Caravan. I felt some drowsiness. All of a sudden, I got up from sleep and happened to see a man in that wilderness. I hurriedly marched towards him and saw that he was a boy of tender age and his beard had not yet grown out. He was handsome like the mid-day sun. He was an embodiment of beauty and delicacy." I said to him : "Peace be upon you !" In return he said : "O Ibrahim! Peace be upon you also!" I was greatly astonished when I heard him calling my name so much so that I could not help speaking. I with extreme amazement, asked him : "O boy ! How did you come to know my name when you had never seen me before ?" He told : "O Ibrahim! The moment I was blessed with wisdom, I never remained ignorant, and since that time I was favoured with His (God's) meeting, I never suffered separation." I asked him : "What urgency has compelled you to come here in this forest in such a sweltering heat." He told: "O Ibrahim! I have neither shown any attachment to any one else save Him (God) ; nor have made any companion and comrade except Him. I have devoted myself entirely to Him, believing in Him as One God." I asked him : "What is the source of your eating and drinking (livelihood)?" He told: "It is unto God." I said: "By God ! I fear the loss of your life due to troubles I have just narrated." The boy burst into tears, which seemed to be rolling down his cheeks like pearls

and he recited some poetic verses which are translated as under :—

"Who can cow me down by the troubles of the forest when I am covering the distance of this forest by travelling towards my God and when I have already believed in him. His intense love is becoming a cause of my anxiety ; and the eagerness to meet Him is urging me forward and forward and that a lover of Allah can never be afraid of a person. If I feel hungry, the remembrance of Allah will satisfy it and I cannot be thirsty because of Allah's praise ; and If I am weak, love of Allah can take me from Hejaz to Khurasan, that is, from the East to the West. You take me as weak due to my tender age. Don't censure me. What was to be, has been"

I asked him : "I adjure you to disclose to me your age." He said : "You have put me to a hard test. My age is twelve years." Then he said : "O Ibrahim ! Let me know the main object of your enquiring about my actual age which has already been told to you." I told him that I was taken aback when I heard you talk like this. He said : "Thank God. He hath favoured me with countless blessings and it is the grace of Allah that He made me more venerable than most of His obedient bondsmen are." Ibrahim says : "His beauty, his good manners and his sweet talk amazed me very much." I said : "All praise be to Allah ! How handsome human figure the True and Almighty God hath created!" The boy bowed his head for a while andthen, by raising his face up, gazed at me with frowning looks and recited some poetic verses the translation of which

is given below :

"If Hell is my punishment, it will be a destruction for me. At that time, this beauty and grace of mine will be of no avail. The doom, at that moment, will reduce all my qualities to nothingness and I will have to weep in the Hell for a long period. And the Omnipotent, the Glorious and the Majestic God would say : O the worst slave ! Thou art one of my nonbelievers. You had defied Me in the world. You had disobeyed Me. Had you forgotten My covenant which I had made since Eternity ; or had you forgotten your meeting with Me on the Last Day (the Resurrection Day) ? O Ibrahim ! on that day, you would see the faces of the believers shining like a full moon, and the True and Almighty God would cause the removal of the curtain of Light as a result of which these believers by seeing the Holy Being, would become so confounded that they would forget each and every comfort. And the True and Almighty God would favour these obedient believers with dresses of awe and pleasure, and their faces would also be blessed with brightness and freshness".

After reciting these poetic verses, he said : "O Ibrahim ! Forsaken is the one who has been separated from his friend ; and one who has earned a good deal of share from the obedience of Allah, is blessed with His meeting. O Ibrahim ! You have been separated from your companions of journey. I confirmed his statement by saying that I was in the

same state and that I would request you in the name of Allah to pray for me to the effect that I might meet my companions."

On my saying this, that boy looked towards the sky and uttered something in such a gentle voice that his lips were seen vibrating. At that moment, I fell into sleep or became unconscious. On recovering from this state, I found myself on the back of a camel in the midst of the Caravan and my companion, who was also riding on my camel along with me, was saying : "O Ibrahim ! Be cautious and sit firm lest you should fall from the camel. And I knew nothing about that boy who either had flown towards the sky or got down into the earth. When I, after covering the whole journey, reached 'Haram Sharif' the sacred territory of Mecca, I saw that boy weeping, while holding the curtain of sacred Ka'ba, and was reciting some poetic verses, the translation of which runs as follows :—

"I am holding the curtain of Ka'ba and also visiting Allah's House ; but what is Thee (Allah) I have travelled on foot towards Allah's House without using any conveyance as I am, despite my tender age, a devoted lover. I have been since my childhood, when I knew nothing about love, ready to die for Thee ; and, if the people begin to accuse me for any thing, it is no matter because I am still a boy of the school (*i.e* a raw and unexperienced man) in this sphere of extreme devotion. O Allah ! If the time of my death come it may then perhaps be possible to be blessed with Thy meeting."

After this, he fell prostrate and I continued to look

at him. Subsequently, I went to him and shook him but he had taken his last breath. 'May Allah be pleased with him and he with Allah !' Ibrahim (mercy be upon him) says : "I experienced a severe shock on his death. I stood up from that place and returned to my retiring place and secured a piece of cloth for his shroud, also took with myself one or two persons for assistance, and reached the spot I had left him dead but his corpse was not found anywhere. I enquired about him from other pilgrims but there was none who either knew him or had seen him. Then I perceived that Almighty and Glorious God might have hidden him from the eyes of the people. I returned to my retiring place and felt some drowsiness and in the dream I saw that he was amidst a huge gathering and was ahead of all ; and so much light was emitting out from him and such an excellent dress he was wearing that no words are adequate to describe them. I asked him : "Are you the same boy?" He replied in the affirmative. I asked him : "Have you not courted death?" He said : "Yes." "I told him : "I went in quest of you sincerely for the purpose of performing your funeral ceremonies but you could not be traced out." He said : "O Ibrahim ! Listen. The same Being that turned me out of the city and blessed me with His love and separated me from my hearth and home, has performed my funeral rites and thus saved me to be in need of any one else." I asked him : "What the Almighty God had done with you after your death?" He told : "The Almighty God caused me to stand before Him and said : 'What do you want?' I implored : 'O God! Thou art the apex of my aspiration and thou art the alpha and

omega of my ambitions.' God said : 'You are, no doubt, my true bondsman, and you can get everything you desire'." I prayed : "It is my utmost desire that Thou accept my intercession in case of my contemporaries." Allah said : "Your intercession for all of them is accepted." Ibrahim (mercy be upon him) says that after this, the boy shook his hands with me at the time of his parting with me, and then I woke up from my sleep. I performed the remaining rites of my Hajj but I felt agitated because of the memory of that boy. After performing my pilgrimage, I returned but, on the way, all the members of the Caravan said : "O Ibrahim ! Every one is surprised by the perfume that your hands are smelling out and that how fine is it !" The authorities narrating this event say that the same fragrance continued to emit from Ibrahim's hands till his death."

The Story of the Young Man

Hadrat Ibrahim Khawas (mercy be upon him) says: "I was going for Hajj in the company of many other friends who had set out for the same purpose. I was, during the course of the journey, overcome, at one moment, by an urge of solitude, and there arose a keen desire in my heart to travel alone by leaving the company of all of my companions. I left that path on which all were travelling and adopted another path, where I was alone. I continued my journey without any break for three days and three nights and during this time I neither thought of eating nor of drinking, nor did I think of anything else. After travelling for three days and three nights, I

reached thick green forest wherein were growing fruits and flowers of numerous kinds—all fragrant and sweet. In the midst of these gardens there was a bubbling spring. I perceived it as paradise and was extremely amazed. I was still in the grip of this amazement when I happened to see a party heading towards me. The faces of its members were like human beings and were wearing beautiful sheets of cloth having pictures upon them. These people surrounded me and saluted me. I responded to their salutation, and said: "Where are you, and where I am?" Then a thought came to me that these were jinn. In the meanwhile, one of them said: "There is disagreement between them on a proposition and that we belong to the race of jinns who at the night of taking an oath of allegiance for the next world, had listened to the Holy Book of Allah from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) relieved us from all the worries of the world, and the Glorious God decorated this place for us." I asked: "At what distance is that place (from this place) where I had left my companions of journey?" On this question of mine. one of them smiled and told: O Abdul-Ishaque! Mysterious are the ways of Allah. There never came a person belonging to our specie except one person. A young man of your race had come here and died at this very spot. Lo! This is his grave. I saw his grave which was situated near the brink of a pond in the circumference of which there was a small garden, wherein were growing flowers of such a kind that I had never seen before." Then that jinn began to say: "The distance, between this and that place, is so much that one would take months to

cover it." Ibrahim (mercy be upon him) said: "Good! Tell me the traits of that boy." One of them told: "We people were discussing about the intense love of Allah while sitting beside that spring and, in the meantime, there came a young man, who saluted us. We responded to his salutation," and asked him: "O young man! Where have you come from?" He told: "I have come from the city of Neshapur." We asked him: "How many days have passed since you left this city?" He replied: "Seven days." We asked him: "What was your object for leaving the city?" The young man told: "I have heard the Holy Commandment of the Almighty and Glorious God the translation of which is given below :—

> "Turn unto your Lord repentant, and surrender unto Him, before there comes unto you the doom, when you cannot be helped from any quarter" (Surah—The Troops).

We asked the young man: "What is meant by "Penitence" and "Doom"?" He began to explain that and when he came to discuss the "Doom", he screamed and died. We, the people, buried him into this grave. Ibrahim (mercy be upon him) says: "I was very much impressed to hear this story. After this, I went near the grave of that young man and saw there lying a very big bouquet of Narcissus on the side of his head, and, on his grave, found some words written in Arabic, the translation of which is as follows :—

> "This is the grave of Allah's friend who died because of his keen sense of modesty."

And there was written, on a leaf of Narcissus, the explanation of "Penitence". I read that. Those jinns

asked me to tell them the meaning of it. I told them the meaning of it and they became very glad and began to revel; and, then coming back to the previous state of mind said: "Our problem about which we were in disagreement with each other, has been solved." Ibrahim (mercy be upon him) says: "I then felt some drowsiness. After this when I woke up, I was near the mosque of 'Aisha (God be pleased with her) which is in the neighbourhood of Tan'im (near Mecca) and found a bouquet of flowers lying in my clothes, which remained in my custody for one year and its flowers remained fresh for one year. After a few days, it was, however, found to be lost by itself."

The Story of a Woman

Abu-ul-Hassan Siraj (mercy be upon him) says : "Once set out for the performance of pilgrimage (Hajj). I was making a circuit of Holy Ka'ba when I happened to see a fair-faced woman. I said : By God ! I have not seen such a beautiful woman so far. All this beauty of her face is because of the fact that she must not have suffered any grief or sorrow." She heard this statement of mine and said : "What have you said ? By God ! I am immersed into griefs and my heart is afflicted with adversities and misfortunes and no one is there to share with me the pangs of grief." I asked : "What happened to you?" She said: "My husband slaughtered a goat. My two small children were playing and an infant was in my lap. I stood up for cooking meal." Thereupon one of these two said to the other: "May I tell you how our father slaughtered the goat." The other replied in the affirma-

tive. And at once he killed his brother like a goat by laying him on the ground. He then ran away on account of fear, and climbed up a mountain where a wolf devoured him. His father went out in search of him and, during the course of his quest of him, he died due to the intensity of thirst. I caused the infant to sit and went towards the door of the house with the hope of getting some information about the whereabouts of my husband. The infant crawled to the fire upon which the earthen pot was lying. As soon as, he disturbed it, it fell upon him in the boiling condition as result of which his body was burnt removing the flesh from the bones. I had one young daughter who was in her husband's house. When the information of this calamity reached her, she fell down dead. It was I who was left alone." I asked her: "How did you endure all these misfortunes?" She said: "A person who would ponder over 'Patience' and 'Impatience', would see much difference between them. The reward of 'Patience' is noble and, for 'impatience' there is no reward." Then, she recited these three verses and went away. The translation of these verses is as follows :

"I endured because endurance is the best thing to rely upon. If any advantange could be obtained by 'impatience' I must have adopted it. I endured many a misfortune that if these fell even on mountains, these must have broken into pieces. I exercised a full control over my tears and thus barred them to come out. Now, those tears are falling within my heart."

The Story of Rashid Bin Sulaiman

Hadrat Dahhak Maz'ahim (mercy be upon him) says : "On Friday night, I went out with the intention of visiting the principal mosque of Kufa. It was a moonlit night. In the yard of the mosque, I saw a young man, lying prostrate and weeping bitterly. I took him for a friend of Allah. I approached him with a view to listening to his talk. He was saying :

"O Master of all Honour ! I only trust in Thee. Prosperous is he whose main objective is to seek Thy pleasure. Prosperous is he who spends the whole night in awe and fear of Thee and gives vent to his feelings of sorrow only before the Master of all glory. And he has no objective and no care besides this that he may spend his life in ceaseless love of Allah. When he under the cover of night, is busy supplicating Allah, He responds to his supplication saying : 'Here I am with you'."

He was repeating these words with tears welling up from his eyes. It was out of sympathy that I also began to weep. Then he spoke in such a manner as if he were seeing some celestial light and hearing someone reciting the two verses, the translation of which is given as under :

"My bondsman ! Here I am.
Thou art under My Protection,
And what thou art saying is audible to Me.
My angels are fond of Thee,
And all Thy sins have We forgiven."

Then I, (says Hadrat Dahhak) said to him: "May peace be upon you!" He, in return, said: "May peace

also be upon you !" I said : "May the Glorious Lord bless this night for you and take pity upon you ; but let me know who you are?" He said : "I am Rashid bin Sulaiman." I recognised him by name, as I had already heard about his qualities and had a keen desire to meet him but failed to do so. The Almighty God had that day provided me an opportunity to do so. When I requested him to stay with me, he said : "It is very difficult. When a human being is blessed with the delights of Communion with his Lord, he can never have any affinity with the creatures save Him. By God ! If any of these saints of the past happens to pass by us, he will certainly say : 'These people do not believe in the Last Day.' After saying this, Rashid disappeared. God knows better whether he f w to the sky or disappeared into the earth. Separation from him aggravated my griefs and I prayed to God that He may again provide me an opportunity to meet him before I die. Once I set out for Pilgrimage (Hajj) and saw under the shade of the wall of the Holy Ka'ba, surrounded by people who were reciting to him the Surah An'am. On seeing me, he smiled and said : "This is the fruit of the kindness of the learned Ulema and that was the blessing of the saints." Then he stood up and shook hands with me and embraced me and said: "Did you beg your Lord for your meeting with me." I replied in the affirmative. He said: "All praise is due to Allah. I blessed him. Then I requested him to let me know what he had seen and heard on that night." He cried so loudly that I thought as if his heart would break. He fell down senseless on the ground and the people, who were surrounding him and reciting the Qur'an to him,

had gone away. When he regained his senses, he said: "O my brother ! You do not know the depth of grief and terror which is in the hearts of Allah's friends, as they disclose His secrets." I asked him : "Who were those people who were reciting beside you?" He told : "That was a party of jinns. I respect them due to my old relations with them. They perform Pilgrimage (Hajj) in my company every year, and recite to me the Holy Qur'an." Then he bade me farewell with blessings saying :

> "May the Almighty and Glorious God arrange your meeting with me in the heaven where there will be neither separation, nor toil, nor grief, nor affliction. After saying this, he disappeared. Hereafter I never saw him."

The Story of a Girl

Muhammad b. Hussain Baghdadi (mercy be upon him) says : "Once I set out for Pilgrimage (Hajj). I was, by chance, passing through the bazaar of Mecca when I saw an old man holding the hand of a girl, who had grown pale but had a radiant face." That old man was crying out : "Is there one to purchase this girl? Is there anyone willing to pay more than twenty gold coins as a price for her with this condition that I shall not be accountable for any shortcomings of hers." I went near that venerable old man and asked him : "We have come to know of her price, please tell us about her shortcomings." He then counted them.

"She is a mad girl ; and always looks worried, she offers prayers throughout the night, observes fast during the day ; neither eats nor

drinks and likes solitude at every place."

These qualities of hers fascinated me and I purchased her and brought her to my dwelling place. I saw her sitting lowering her head towards the earth. She then raised her head and said : "My junior master ! Which is your native country? Allah may shower His mercy upon you." I told her : ' It is Iraq." She asked : "Which part of Iraq,—Basra or Kufa?" I told her : "It is none of these two." She again said : "Do you belong to Baghdad?" I said : "Yes." She exclaimed with joy and said : "It is the city of pious men ; it is the city of God-conscious persons." I wondered how this handmaid, who has been transferred from one cell to another, has a knowledge of the pious persons. I, just out of fun, asked her : "Which of these pious men are known to you?" She began to count them thus :

"Malik b. Din'ar, Bashar Hafi Salih Mari, Abu Ha'tim Sajastani, Ma'ruf Karkhi, Mohammad b. Hussain Baghdadi, Ra'bia, 'Advia, Sha'wana and Maimuna (mercy be upon them)."

I asked her : "How do you come to know about all these pious persons." She said : "O young man ! How can I remain ignorant about them. By God ! These people are the physicians of hearts. These are the people who are closely related to Allah and have thus no care but to seek His pleasure. Their main object of devotion is their Lord. How excellent is their aim, that they are devoted to one Independent Being. Neither do they entangle themselves in the world nor its pleasures and problems." Thereupon I told her: "O girl ! I am Mohammad b. Hussain." She said : "I

prayed to God that He might afford me an opportunity to see you. What about your fascinating voice by which you revived the dead hearts of your disciples (followers) and the eyes of the listeners seemed to be fond of it?" I told her : "I am still blessed with it (the fascinating voice)." She said: "By God! Recite to me some part of the Holy Qur'an." I recited : "With the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful." She cried loudly and became unconscious. I sprinkled water on her and she felt some relief, and said : "When His name has such a deep impact, what would happen to me at the moment which I would know and see Him in the heaven?" Then she said : "Well ! Recite the Quran. May God shower His mercy upon you." I recited a verse from the Holy Qur'an, which is translated as follows :—

> "Do those people, who commit ill-deeds, suppose that We shall make them as those who believe and do good deeds, the same in life and death? Bad is their judgment !" (Jathiya-2)

On hearing this Qur'anic verse, she said : "Thank God ! Neither did I worship anyone else nor did I kiss any idol." She then requested me with a blessing upon me to recite some more verses. I recited Qur'anic verse, the translation of which is given below :—

> "Lo ! We have prepared fire for disbelievers. Its tent would enclose them from all side If they ask for showers, they will be showered with water like molten lead which burneth their faces. Calamitous the drink and all ill the resting-place !" (Kahf-4).

She then added : "Why have you made your

heart so gloomy. Make it live amidst hope and fear." She prayed : "May the Almighty and Glorious God show you His mercy !" She then requested me to recite some more verses. I recited a verse from the Qur'an, which is translated as under :–

"On that day (*i.e.* the Day of Judgment) many of the faces will be as bright as dawn, laughing and rejoicing at good news". ('Abasa).

I also recited this Qur'anic verse: "Faces on that day will be resplendent, looking towards their Lord." (Qiyyama R-1)

Thereupon she said : "Alas ! To what extent shall I be anxious of His meeting on the Day when He will be manifesting Himself to His friends." She then prayed : "May Allah bless you with His mercy ! Recite some more verses." I recited some Qur'anic verses which are translated as follows :–

"There wait on them immortal youths
With bowls and ewers and a cup from a pure spring
Wherefrom they get no aching of the head nor any madness,
And fruit that they prefer,
And flesh of fowls that they desire.
And (there are) fair ones with wide, lovely eyes,
Like unto hidden pearls,
Reward for what they used to do
There here they no vain speaking nor recrimination
(Naught) but the saying: Peace(and again) peace.
And those on the right hand ; what of those on the right hand?

Among thornless lote-trees
And clustered plantations
And spreading shade,
And water gushing,
And fruit in plenty
Neither out of reach nor yet forbidden,
And raised couches ;
Lo ! We have created a (new) creation
And made them virgins.
Lovers, friends,
For those on the right hand." —(The Event-1)

Then the girl told me : "Yours is an engagement with Hurs. You shall spend something on the wedding gifts." I asked her : "What will be their wedding (gift) because I am a poor man." She told : "Their wedding (gift) is to say Tahajjud (a prayer offered after mid-night), keep fast during the day time and have love with the poor and orphans. After this, that maid recited six poetical verses which are translated as under :–

"O that man ! Who seeks engagement with hurs (heavenly virgins) in their veils.
And is desirous of them despite their dignity,
Let him gird up his loin ;
And show no laziness
Strive hard against your self
And train it to endure (hardship)
Observe Tahajjud prayer after mid-night
All these deeds are the nuptial gifts of heavenly virgins,
If thine eyes happen to see them
When they are turning their attention to these

With swelling breasts,
Walking in company of other girls of their age
With shining necklaces on their chests,
All worldly elegance will then
Appear to thee as frivolous".

After having recited these verses, she became unconscious. I again sprinkled water on her face whereby she got some relief. Then she prayed : "O God ! Protect me from the torment. I am, no doubt, the one confessing her sins. Thou hath generously forgiven my sins. Thou art the Gracious and the Beneficent. The people have formed a good opinion about me. But, if Thou forgivest not my faults, I shall be undone. There is no way for me except to have the hope of Thine forgiveness and to expect nothing but Thine Mercy."

After reciting these poetical verses, that girl again became unconscious. When I reached near her, she had died. I received a severe shock and went to the bazaar to purchase things for her funeral. When I returned from the bazaar, I found her corpse shrouded and perfumed ready for the grave. Her shroud (the dress for the grave) consisted of two green sheets of cloth, which was a dress of heaven. On the shroud, there were written two lines with heavenly light. In the first line, there was written, Kalimah Tayyabah : "There is no God save Allah, and Muhammad is His Messenger." The other line consisted of a Qur'anic verse, which is translated as under :

"Remember. No fear shall come upon the friends of Allah, neither shall they grieve."

I, with the assistance of my companions, carried her bier. After saying funeral prayer, I buried her,

recited Surah Yasin over her grave and returned to my small private apartment. Tears were flowing from my eyes. I experienced much agony on account of her death. On coming back, I said two rak'as of supererogatory prayer and fell asleep. In the dream, I saw that girl walking in heaven. She was in a very small but fragrant garden of Saffron. She was wearing the suit of silk and brocade. She was also wearing a crown on her head studded with pearls. She was wearing shoes made of precious stone. The fragrance of musk and ambergris was emitted from her body. Her face was brighter than the sun and the moon. I said : "O girl ! Stay for a while and tell me for what deed, you have been blessed with this place of dignity." She said: "All this is due to my affection showed to the poor and the orphans, my prayer for forgiveness and my act of removing from the way of the Muslims the things causing inconvenience to them." She then recited three poetical verses, which are translated as follows :

"Fortunate is the person
The eyes of whom at nights
Do remain vigilant.
And passes the night in anxiety of His Master's great love.

And laments upon his shortcomings and weeps for his fault of the day,
And stands alone at night,
Does count stars for fear of Allah's punishment.
And the eye of Allah is watching all this state of affairs."

The Story of a Christian Young Man

It was the practice of Hadrat Ibrahim Khawas (mercy be upon him) that whenever he set out on a journey to some place he neither divulged it to anybody nor anyone could have any knowledge of it. He used to take one jar for ablution in his hand and then set out on the journey. Hamid Aswad (mercy be upon him) says: "Once I was, in his company, sitting in the mosque when he took that jar and set out. I also followed him. When we reached Qadsiya, he asked me: 'Hamid! Where do you intend to go?' I told him: 'I only want to accompany you.' He informed me: 'I intend to visit the sacred Mecca.' I stated: 'I shall, if Allah so wills, visit that place (Mecca).' After three days journey, another young man joined us. He travelled with us for a day and night but did not observe a single prayer. I requested Sheikh that the third person who had joined us had not said any prayer. The Sheikh asked him: 'Why have you not observed the prayer?' He told: 'The prayer is not obligatory for me.' He asked: 'Why? Are you not Muslim?' He told: 'I am a Christian, and in Christianity, I spend my life reposing my trust in God. My inner self had whispered that I had become perfect in the matter of trust.' I refuted his claim and brought him in this wilderness where there was none save one God, with the intention of testing his claim. The Sheikh however, said nothing but walked on and advised me not to interfere with him and let him travel with them. He travelled on with us until we reached "Battan Mard" The Sheikh put off his dirty clothes and washed them. Then he asked that boy: 'What is your name?' He

told: 'My name is Abdul Masih.' The Sheikh told: 'O Abdul Masih! This is now the boundary of Mecca. In other words, this is *Haram Sharif* and the Almighty and Glorious God has prohibited the entry for those who ascribe partners to Allah.' Thereupon, the Sheikh also recited to him a Qur'anic verse, the translation of which is:—

> "Those, who ascribe partners to Allah, are dirty. They should not even come nigh the sacred mosque."

And the outcome of the test you wanted to give to your inner self, is already known to you. So you should not enter Mecca. If we happen to see you there we will object to your presence. Hamid says: "We left him there and moved forward. We reached the sacred Mecca. Subsequently when we reached 'Arafat, we saw that boy there wearing the ihram. He came to us by looking at the faces of the people (pilgrims) and fell down at the feet of Sheikh. The Sheikh asked: "O Abdul Masih! What has happened to you?" He requested the Sheikh not to call him by this name of his, as he was not then the servant of Masih but a slave of that Being whose slave was also Hadrat Masih (peace be upon him). Hadrat Ibrahim (mercy be upon him) asked him to tell him his history. He narrated thus: "I sat down at the place where you had left me. And when another caravan of Muslims came there, I liked the Muslims, wearing ihram, and joined their company by impersonating myself as a Muslim. On reaching the sacred Mecca, when I saw Allah's House all other religions, except Islam, had paled into insignificance. I took bath, became a

Muslim and put on ihram. I have been looking for you since this morning. Thereafter, he and we remained together until he breathed his last in the company of the saints."

Story of a child belonging to family of Hadrat Imam Husain

Hadrat Behlole (mercy be upon him) says: "I was walking on a road of Basra when I happened to see some boys playing with walnuts and almonds, and a boy, standing near them, was weeping. I thought that perhaps the boy had no almonds and walnuts, and that was the cause of his weeping." I said to him: "O son! May I buy for you walnuts and almonds that you may also play with them." He looked at me and said: "O Behlole! Are we born to play?" I asked him: "What is then the purpose of our birth?" He told me: "To acquire knowledge and worship God." I said: "May the Almighty and Glorious God bless you with long life. Let me know where you have come to know of this things?" He said: "This is a Commandment of the Almighty God written in the Qur'an and he recited to me this verse:

"Deemed ye then that we had created you for naught and that ye would not be returned unto us." (The Believers-6)

I said, "O son! You seemed to be a great philosopher and as such, give me some advice." He recited the following poetic verses :

The world is mortal. Every one is ready to march away from this world. So neither the world is immortal for any living one, nor any

living one is immortal for the world. Death and misfortune seem to be rushing violently toward man.

So, O foolish! Ye hath been deceived by the world.

Come to thyself and earn from the world something to depend upon.

After reciting these poetic verses, the boy turned his face towards the sky and raised his hands. A stream of tears flowed down on his cheeks and he was saying:

"O That Hallowed Being who is implored and trutsted in.

O that Hallowed Being in Whom when one trusts, one cannot meet with failure

But his hope is fulfilled."

After having recited these verses he fell down senseless upon the ground. I raised up his head at once and placed it in my lap and started wiping with my sleeve the dust which had besmeared his face. When he came to his senses, I said : "O son ! why are you overwhelmed with such an awe. You are too young to commit any sin." He said : "Behlole ! Leave it aside. I always saw my mother, first putting the small pieces of wood in the fire and then the big ones. I am afraid that I may not be put into the Fire of Hell first like small pieces of wood." I said: "O son ! You seem to be a wise man, hence you should give me advice." Thereupon, he recited fourteen poetic verses, the translation of which is given below :—

"I remained careless and the angel of death is pursuing me with death. If I do not leave

the world today, I shall have to leave it tomorrow without fail. I embellished my body with excellent and fine dress in spite of the fact that my body must suffer decay. I am, at present, witnessing that scene, when I shall be lying decayed into the grave. There I shall be lying under the heap of clay and underneath there shall be an abyss and all this beauty and elegance of mine will vanish away and become extinct so much so that there shall not be any flesh and skin on my bones. I am perceiving that life is going to finish but the ambitions are still yearning in my breast and there still remains a very long journey to be covered; and there is also not a little provision for the journey; and I defied my Seer and Protector by committing sins openly and have committed evil deeds, which now cannot be undone. And I concealed my sins from the people so that my vices may not come to their notice. But, all my secret sins will tomorrow become apparent before the Great Master (Allah). I, no doubt, fear Him but I also trust in His extreme clemancy and would continue to trust in Him as that He is All-Forgiving. Who can, except Him, grant forgiveness. All praise is undoubtedly due to that Perfect Being. Had there been no other calamity after death, but decay, it could alone serve as a grim warning against our sensuous pleasures. But what should we do, we have lost our wits. We did not take lesson from any thing. So, there is now no way for me, but to pray to the

effect that the Forgiver of sins may pardon my sins. When a fault is committed by the servant, it is the Master who forgives him. I am, no doubt, the worst slave, who committed the sin of breaking the covenant of my Allah and the disloyal slaves are faithless. O My Master when Thy Fire will burn my body, then in what condition shall I be, as even the hardest stones cannot endure that Fire. At the time of death, I shall be left alone; and, in the grave, I shall be going alone. I shall also be raised alone from the grave. (There shall be no one to help me at any place). . So O That Perfect Being Who Himself is alone and hath no partner with Him! Take pity on such a person, who has been left alone."

Hadrat Behlole (mercy be upon him) says: "On hearing these poetic verses of his I was so much impressed that I fell down senseless upon the ground. When I, after a considerable time, regained my senses, that boy had gone away. I asked those children playing there about that boy." They said: "Don't you know him ?"

He is from the descendents of Hadrat Imam Husain (may God be pleased with him). I said: "I was myself anxious to know about his lineage. In fact, this fruit could have been of that tree only. May Almighty God benefit us with the blessings of that family! O God! Accede to our prayers."

The Story of a Devotee of Allah

Abu Sa'id Moosli (mercy be upon him) says: "Fath b. Sa'id (mercy be upon him), after saying the

prayer of 'Id-ul-Adha returned quite late. On return, when he saw that the smoke of the cooking of meat was coming out from inside the houses, he began to weep and said: "The people have, by sacrifices, gained access to Thee. O my Lord! Alas! Would that I knew that what I should sacrifice! After saying this, he fell down unconscious. I sprinkled water on him. He came to his senses after some time. Then, he stood up and went away." When he came in the streets of the city, he turned his face towards the sky and said: "O my Lord! Thou knowest the long period of my grief and my wandering from street to street. O my Lord! How long wilt Thou keep me imprisoned here. After saying this, he again fell in a swoon. I again sprinkled water and he felt some relief. After few days, he breathed his last."

The Story of a Cruel Person

One of the rulers of Bukhara was a great tyrant. One day he was going on his ride when he happened to see a dog suffering from itch and cold and thus in the grip of great trouble. As soon as that cruel king saw him, tears welled up in his eyes, and asked his servant to bring that dog to his home, and to look after that until he returns. After giving this instruction he took his way. When he returned, he ordered them to bring the dog and got it tied in a corner of his house. He threw a piece of bread and, got the water placed before it, and caused the oil to be rubbed on it and got the body covered with a sheet. Fire was lit around that in order to protect it from severe cold. Since this incident, only two days had passed when that cruel ruler breathed

his last. A pious man (saint) who was well aware of his cruelties and atrocities, saw him in a dream? He asked him : "What has happened to you?" He told : 'The Almighty God caused me stand before Him and said to me : 'You were a dog (*i.e.*, ye did works like dogs and not like human-beings).' So, We gave ye a dog that is, We favoured ye with Our Forgiveness, because of your kind treatment with that dog and as for Mine rights upon you, I decided to forgo them. Almighty God is very Gracious. He is Master of all the gracious ones. He is the King. His kindness is boundless. If He is pleased even with an insignificant deed of a person, that person is successful. The man should always try to seek His Pleasure as no one knows when for a small liking of His, one may attain salvation."

The Story from which one can get warning

Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may God be pleased with him) says : "Qaroon belonged to the family of Moses (mercy and blessings be upon him) and was his cousin. He made great progress in the worldly knowledge and was jealous of Hadrat Moses (mercy and blessings be upon him) said to him : The Almighty and Glorious God hath commanded me to take poor-due (zakat) from you. He refused to give zakat and said to the people that Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him) wanted to eat up your wealth on the pretext of zakat. He ordered for the prayer and you tolerated. He gave other commandments and you obeyed them. Now he orders you to pay zakat (poor due) and asks you to submit to it.' The people said .

"We cannot tolerate it. You should yourself tell us some plan." He told them : "I have thought out a plan and that is to induce a corrupt woman to put a blame on Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him) that he wants to attack her chastity."

The people succeeded in influencing her on promise of some great reward that she should bring this calumny against Hadrat Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him). When Qaroon got her assent he went to Hadrat Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him) and said to him : "Reveal to the children of Israel the Commandments of Allah, which He hath sent unto you, by gathering them at one place. Hadrat Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him) liked this proposal and got all the children of Israel assembled at one place and when all were present, Hadrat Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him) delivered to them Commandments of Almighty God." He told them: "Allah hath commanded to worship Him only, not to ascribe any partner to Him, treat your relatives with kindness and then informed them about other commandments through which it was also revealed that if a married man commits fornication, he must be stoned to death." Upon this, the people said : "And if you commit fornication !" Hadrat Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him) told : "If I commit this offence I should also be stoned to peath." The people said: "You have fornicated." Hadrat Moses enquired from them in utter amazement: "Have I committed fronication?" The people said: "You have done so." And, after saying this, they called for that woman and asked her : "What do you say about Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him) ?" Hadrat

Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him) adjured her to state the fact. The woman said : "Since you are asking me something on oath, I dare not tell a lie. The fact is that these people have promised me so much reward for casting upon you this blame. You are, however, innocent. O hearing this, Hadrat Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him) fell down in prostration with tears in his eyes. In prostration, the Almighty and Glorious God sent unto him a Divine revelation : "There is no cause for you to worry about it. We have favoured ye with a mighty power to rule over earth so that you award punishment to these people." Whatever order you will give to the earth about them, it will submit to that. Hadrat Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him) raised his head from prostration and ordered the earth to swallow them up. The earth had still engulfed them upto their heels, when they begin to implore Hadrat Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him) to spare their lives. Hadrat Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him) again ordered the earth to engulf them. When they had sunk into the earth up to their necks, they again started imploring Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him). Moses again ordered the earth to engulf them. The earth swallowed them all. Thereupon, the Almighty and Glorious God sent a Divine revelation on Moses (mercy and blessing be upon him). They begged and implored you to spare their lives. I swear by My Honour that if they had called me and begged Me, I would have acceded to their request.

The Story of Hadrat David

It is a tradition from Abu Huraira (mercy be

upon him) that Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said Hadrat Dawud (mercy and blessing be upon him) was an embodiment of modesty. Whenever he went out, he used to close the door of his house. One day he went out after bolting the door as usual, but on his return, he found a man standing inside the house. He asked: "Who are you?" He told : "I am that being who is not afraid of the kings even and whom none can refuse admittance." He said : "By God ! You are the angel of death. You are welcome. You have brought the commandment of the Almighty God." After saying this, he lay down by covering himself with a sheet and angel of death extracted his soul.

It is a tradition from Tibrani on the authority of Hussain (may God be pleased with him) that Gabriel (Arch angel) visited Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) during the days of his last illness, and asked : How are you ? The Holy Prophet told him that he was seriously ill. In the meanwhile, the angel of death knocked at the door and asked for the permission to come in. Hadrat Gabriel said : "O Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) That is the angel of death (Izra'il). He seeks your permission to come in. Prior to this, he never asked for such permission and would never ask after this." Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Let him come in." Gabriel permitted him. The angel of death appeared and stood up before Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said : "The Almighty God hath sent me to you with His explicit instruction to do as

you like me to do. So, if you allow me to separate the soul from your body, I will do this otherwise not." Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked him : "Are you authorized to do so." He replied in the affirmative with the remarks : "O Messenger of Allah, Allah hath given me such a command." Then Gabriel told Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) : "God is very eager to meet you." Thereupon, Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : "O angel of death ! Comply with the order of Allah." Upon this, the angel of death seized the breath of Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Death is Certain Wherever You Will Go

It is a tradition narrated on the authority of Khuthaima (may God be pleased with him) that once the angel of death (Hadrat Izra'il) appeared in the form of human being in the court of Hadrat Sulaiman (peace be upon him) and gazed continuously at a person present there for some time. When the angel of death vanished, that person asked Hadrat Sulaiman (peace be upom him): "Who was that person?" He told him that that was the angel of death. He remarked: "The angel of death had gazed at me in such a manner as if he had determined to take my life." Hadrat Sulaiman (peace be upon him) asked him : "What do you want ?" He requested him to drop him in India. He commanded the air to carry him up and drop him in India. Consequently the air carried him to India.

be upon him). He asked him : "Why did you fix your gaze at that person?" He told : "I wondered that the Almighty God had commanded me to take the life of this person in India whereas he is sitting here in your presence."

The description of the angel of death (Hadrat Izra'il) and his, companion-angels

Here is a commandment of Almighty God contained in a Qura'nic verse :

> So much so when any one of you dies, Our angels take him into their possession and they do not exceed the limit.

Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him), while elucidating the meaning of this Qur'anic verse, has said : The angels referred to in this verse are meant to be the helper-angels of the angel of death (Hadrat Izra'il). And Wahb b. O Munibbah has said: "The angels who visit the man and record his age, take his life also and after taking that they hand it over to the angel of death (Izra'il) who is their leader."

There is a tradition from Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) that when the Almighty God decided to create Adam, one of the angels supporting heaven was sent down to the earth to bring some clay. As he was about to take clay the earth said : "I adjure you in the name of that Hallowed Being, who hath sent you not to take clay from me as tomorrow it will have to burn in the Fire." On hearing this, the angel dropped the idea. When he presented himself to God, He asked him : "Who prohibited you to carry out My order ?" The angel implored : "O God ! The

earth begged me in Thy name not to take clay and so I dropped the idea." Then the Almighty God deputed another angel to bring clay from the earth. To him also the earth begged in the name of Allah not to do so. Subsequently, God sent down all the angels one by one and all of them were helpless in bringing the clay. Thereupon, the Almighty God sent down the angel of death (Hadrat Izra'il). When the angel of death determined to take clay, the earth implored him also in the name of Allah not to do so. The angel of death said to earth : "I must comply with the order of One Who has sent me to the earth." Then he took from each and every part of the earth some clay of good and bad quality and appeared before God, and fashioned Adam's body by fermenting that with Heaven's water.

Zuhri has also narrated such a tradition. He said that the former angel was Israfil while the latter was Michael. And Ibn Mas'ud and many other companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) have said that the prominent angels are Gabriel and Michael.

The Burial of the Dead

We praise Allah and invoke blessings upon the Gracious Messenger.

With the name of Allah, the Beneficent and Merciful.

The Burial of Dead Bodies

Regarding the burial of dead bodies, a chart giving details of clothes for the coffin and other requirements concerning it is divided into the following parts :—

(1) The description of the throes of death.

(2) The description of washing the dead body.
(3) The description of shrouding the dead body.
(4) The description of carrying the bier to the grave.
(5) The description of the funeral prayer.
(6) The description of the grave and the rites of burial.
(7) The description of visiting the graves.
(8) The description of necessary information pertaining to the burial.

1. The description of the throes of death

When the signs of death become manifest on a person, when his footsteps begin to stagger and he is unable to walk properly; the nose is curved, pits appear on the temples and the skin of the face becomes stiff we should lay him down on the right side of his by keeping his face in the direction of Holy Ka'bah. And it is preferential if a pious man recites loudly near him "Kalimah-e-Shahadat" :—

> I declare that there is no God but Allah, and I declare that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger (Prophet).

And the pious man should not compel the dying man to recite the same as he is undergoing the agonies of death. If he recites it (Kalima-e-Shahadat) once, it is sufficient. If he subsequently speaks about anything, the pious man should again advise him in the same manner. And it would be quite advisable if the pious man recites to him "*Sura Ya Sin*" by sitting near him and God-fearing people should come and sit near him. When he is dead, his beard should be tied to his head

with a piece of cloth and his eyes closed softly. And one should, at the time of tying the cloth, recite to him the following tradition :

> In the name of Allah, and with (the blessing for one) who follows the creed of Ibrahim : O Allah! make his affair easy for him and make his subsequent (journey) light for him and bless him with his meeting with Thee and make that better for him what he has been able to get than what has gone out of him.

And his hands and feet should be laid to rest straight and it is better if his clothes are put off and his body covered with a sheet of cloth and his clothes be placed on the cot or wooden bench and should not be left lying upon the ground. Then his relatives, friends, intimates and others, living in his neighbourhood, should be informed of his death so that they may join his funeral prayer and pray for him. And it is quite advisable if his debt is cleared off. And the arrangements for his burial are made at once. Before washing his dead body the recitation of the Holy Qur'an by his side is prohibited.

2. How the dead body is to be washed

The washing of the dead body is an obligatory act. In other words, it is a duty enjoined upon all Muslims, but, if performed by one, it is supposed to be performed by the whole Muslim community. The moment we intend to wash the dead body, the wooden bench, meant for washing, should be fumigated with fragrance. In other words, all the four sides of the bench should be fumigated with fragrance either once,

or thrice or five times, and then the dead body should be placed on it, and, it would be better if a curtain is hung on all sides. Then put off the clothes of the dead and cover the body from the navel to the knee. And a piece of cloth should be wrapped on one hand, and then his private parts cleansed and then his limbs should be washed in the manner as ablution is done. However, if the deceased is a child, then there is no need of the performance of the ablution. The manner in which this ablution is required to be performed is given below :—

First, wash the face of the dead person, then wash both the hands upto the elbows, then wipe his head with both hands. Lastly wash both the feet, but the right one should be washed first. And don't pour water into the mouth and the nose. Some scholars are of the opinion that a piece of wet cloth should be put into the mouth and the teeth should also be cleansed by rinsing them. The dirt on the lips should be removed and the inner side of the nose be also cleansed with the cloth.

Hot water should be used for washing, and if possible it should be boiled, after mixing in it the leaves of the "Lote tree" and it should then be filtered. And, if the hair on the head are long, the medicinal seeds should be properly mixed in the water. Both the head and the beard should either be washed with this water or the soap may be used. Then turn the corpse over the left side and wash its right side right from head to foot. Again, turn it over the right side and wash it in such a manner that the whole body may be washed with water. Subsequent to this, it should be laid down

on its back, by giving it some support; and then the abdomen be rubbed softly from upside to down side. If some filth comes out of it, it should be cleansed. However, the washing and ablution should not be repeated. And the head and the beard should not be combed. Neither the nails should be cut nor the hair in the armpits should be removed.

The washing of a drowned person is also obligatory, but, if it is so much swollen that the washing becomes impossible, then pouring of water over the dead body would suffice.

As regards the child, who died just after his birth, the washing of him is also essential. We should name him and offer funeral prayer after washing his body. It is also essential to wash the still born child and bury it after wrapping it in the cloth. No funeral prayer is to be offered over it. The unidentifiable dead body is to be treated as Muslim in case there are some marks of Islam on it—or he is found in the sacred land of Mecca. As regards the person, who died during the sea journey, he should be thrown into the sea after washing him properly and performing his burial and offering funeral prayer for him. It is better if the man who performs the washing of the dead, may also take a bath after performing ablution. If a polluted man or a woman passing through her menstrual period or a non-believer washes the dead, it is lawful but not desirable. And it is preferable if a relative of the dead washes him and, if he does not know how to give bath to the dead, then, in such a case, a man who wards off evils, should wash him. And the man performing the washing of the dead should do so properly so that

water may reach all limbs of the body. And if he sees the good signs on the body of the dead, he should inform about them to others but if he happens to see ugly signs *e.g.*, foul smell of his body, he should not talk about them. The corpse of a man should be washed by the men only and that of a woman by women only. And washing of the infant (male and female) is allowed by both men and women. And in case of an emergency, the wife can wash her dead husband, but husband cannot wash the dead body of his wife. In case a woman dies and there is no woman to give her bath for the grave, then if the man present is a "mahram", he should perform her ablution with clay or dust and if he is a stranger, he should perform "Tayammum" and when giving "Tayammum to her hands, he should keep his looks downward. The order is one and the same both for an old and young woman. And if a man dies and there is no man to perform washing a "mahram" woman is allowed to give him bath and, if this is impossible, then a female stranger is allowed to do so by coiling round her hands a piece of cloth. If the son of a non-believer dies, that non-believing father is not allowed to wash him for the grave. It is better that a Muslim should give him his last bath. In case someone dies during the journey and water is not available there, his funeral prayer can be observed after giving him "Tayammum" but, if subsequently water is found, then his funeral prayer should again be performed after washing the dead body properly.

3. In the Description of Shrouding the Dead Body

The shrouding of the dead for the grave is "Fard-

i-Kifayah". Three pieces of cloth are required for a proper shrouding of the dead person *viz.* lower garment, shirt and a covering sheet; and only a wrapping sheet is also sufficient for this purpose. In case of an emergency, whatever is available, may be used for shrouding of the dead. The length of the lower garment should be from head to foot and the length of the shirt, without sleeves and collars, should be from neck to foot. And the modern theologians have written that it is also better to tie a turban on the head of a dead scholar but the end of the turban should be towards his mouth. And the shroud of the dead body consists of five pieces of cloth *viz.* Shirt, lower garment, covering sheet, wrapper and a bodice. And only a wrapping cover and covering sheet is also sufficient. The shirt should be in length from shoulders to ankles and the bodice from chest to the knees. The covering sheet should in length, be two hands, and in width, two spans. And the lower garment and the wrapping cover be from head to foot. In case of necessity two clothes for a female and one cloth for a male can also suffice but it is not desirable in ordinary circumstances. And as regards the boys and girls nearing maturity, the law in their case is the same as in the case of men and women. And one piece of cloth of inferior quality for an infant dead body and two pieces of cloth of inferior quality for an infant dead girl would be sufficient.

It is not desirable to shroud the male with pure silk and cloth dyed in saffron but, in case of a female, it is permissible to do so.

White cloth is the best for shrouding purposes, and the new and the old cloth are equally good. If the

dead is a rich person and he leaves behind a small family it is advisable to give him proper shrouding and if the dead is not wealthy and he leaves behind a large family, then it is desirable to shroud him in an ordinary cloth.

This is how the dead body is to be shrouded. Firstly the coffin should be fumigated with fragrance either for once or for thrice or for five times. Then, in case of a male, the cover should be spread upon which the lower garment should be put, and then the dead should be laid on it and later on the dead should be made to lie on the upper garment. And the head, the beard and the whole body be perfumed. However, the fragrance of saffron should not be used for the male. And camphor should be pasted on the forehead, nose, both hands, both knees and both the feet of the dead. After that the left side of the pair of trousers and then the right side of it should be rolled up. Similarly, the outer cover be wrapped and then the knot be tied.

If it is the dead body of a woman the bodice should be spread first and then the wrapping cover put on it and afterwards the dead body be placed on it and after that it should be made to wear the shirt. And her hair should be divided into two parts and placed on both sides of the shirt. And the hair on both the sides be covered by putting on the covering sheet on her head, and the lower garment be put over it, then the covering sheet should be put in the same manner and, after that, the bodice be wrapped up to the knees by placing it on the chest and then drawing it through the armpits. In shrouding and perfuming the dead, those wearing pilgrim's dress or otherwise are equal. And

the dead, who has not left any property, the responsibility of his shrouding lies upon him who was responsible for his maintenance during his lifetime. And the shrouding of the woman is the responsibility of her husband. And if the husband is very poor the people of his neighbourhood are obliged to undertake this responsibility. If a traveller or a poor man dies his coffin may be purchased by collecting donations from the people, and if some amount is left it may be returned to the person who contributed it, otherwise it should be used for shrouding of another poor person in case of his death. And if there is no opportunity for it, it would be spent in charity.

Chart of the details of clothes required for shrouding the dead.

Name of the piece of cloth	Length	Width	Approximate measurement	Remarks
1. Trouser	Two yards	From one yard to two yards	From head	If the cloth is of 14, 15 or 16 girah then it should be 1¼ width.
2, Covering sheet	Two yards	From one yard to two yards	4 girahs more than the trouser	If the cloth is of 14, 15 or 16 girah then it should be 1¼ width.
3. Shirt of 'Kafni'	Two yards to 2.2 yards	One yard	From shoulder to the shank	It should be made of a cloth whose width should either be 14 girahs or one yard. It is put on through the neck after dividing it into two equal parts and making slits into it.
4. Bodice	Two yards	One yard	From the under part of the arm to the knees	It should be made of a cloth whose width should either be 14 girahs or one yard. It

Name of the piece of cloth	Length	Width	Approximate measurement	Remarks
				is put on through the neck after dividing it into two equal parts and making slits into it.
5. Cloth worn round the head	One yard	3/4 yard (12 girahs)	Up to the place where it may reach	The hair of the head are placed on the right and left sides of the chest after dividing them into two parts and wrapping them into it.

Accessories of the Shrouding (Grave Clothes)

1. A cloth worn round the waist.

In length, it should be 1/4 yard more than the bulk of the body of the dead. For a fat man, one yard's length is sufficient, which in width, from navel to the shank of the leg, should be 7/8 yard (14 girahs). Its number should be two.

2. Glove.

Its length and width should be 6 girahs (3/4 yard) and 3 girahs (3/16 yard) respectively. It should be made according to the measurement of the hands. Its number should also be two.

3. Other goods.

Two pitchers, one pot, one bathing board, *Loban* (a kind of incense), cotton, the flowers, camphor according to the requirement, and board or log for the grave according to the measurement of the dead.

4. In the Description of Carrying the Dead Body to the Graveyard

According to Shari'ah the right manner for the carriage of the dead body to the graveyard is this : four men holding the four legs of the cot upon their shoulders should walk forward. They should change their shoulders at ten steps and this act should be done in the like manner at the four legs of the cot carrying the dead. It would be more advisable if the man, carrying the dead, put his shoulder first under the leg on the front side of the cot and, after walking up to ten steps, under the hind leg of the cot. Then, he should again put his left shoulder under the other leg of the front side and at a ten steps' distance, should place on his shoulder the hind leg of the cot. In the like manner, every person should change his shoulders while carrying the dead to the graveyard.

And if the dead is an infant or is a child, it is permissible to carry his corpse by placing it on the hands. While carrying the funeral, we should walk in haste, but we should not be so fast that the bier is jolted. The head of the dead should remain on the front side. The men going along with the funeral should not walk on the right and left of the bier but should walk behind it moving forward calmly. To walk in front of the bier is also lawful. If the bier is carried far away, then we can walk fast and run to join the funeral. To walk on foot is most appropriate. It is also permissible to go by conveyance but it is improper if it goes ahead of the funeral. If the bier is that of a neighbour or of a relative or of a pious man, then to accompany it, is more propitious than to observe voluntary prayer. The men

going along with the bier should remain quiet. Discussion, supplication or recitation of the Holy Qur'an loudly, when going along with the bier, is not desirable. On reaching the graveyard, it is improper to sit down before placing the funeral on the ground. And it is more excellent to stand unless the grave becomes even after putting into it the clay. It is unlawful to moan, to weep loudly or to talk of misfortune and to tear the clothes at the house of the dead or while going along with the bier, as these are the rites of ignorance. We must refrain from such practices. To weep quietly is no sin and patience is no doubt, very rewarding. And the women should not go along with the funeral. If a woman joins the funeral procession and starts weeping, we should desist her from doing so. It is better that the relatives of the dead should carry the funeral. And it is also lawful to carry the funeral on remuneration.

5. In the description of the Funeral prayer

The Funeral Prayer is a 'Farḍ-e-Kifayah' a duty enjoined upon all Muslims but if it is performed by one member, it is regarded to have been performed by the whole of Ummah, otherwise all are sinners. The condition for the funeral prayer is that the corpse must have been washed for the grave. If a dead has been buried without washing or saying funeral prayer, or has been given bath after saying funeral prayer and has been buried or funeral prayer has been said without washing him, then buried, the funeral prayer can be said at the grave within three days. And the people, who flouted the commands of their Muslim ruler, or those who robbed others, or those who killed their fathers,

and mothers, the funeral prayer of these criminals will not be said. And he who used sword against the enemy but it fell upon his own neck and was killed, or he who committed suicide, or was killed in punishment for murder, or stoned to death, the funeral prayer in all these cases will have to be observed. The Imam of the city would be the deserving person to perform the office of Imam for the funeral prayer. After him, the Imam of the locality (Mohallah) and then the relatives of the dead, have a better right to perform the duty of Imam for observing funeral prayer. And the women and the minors have no right of Imamat. If the dead has left behind a will that such a person should lead his funeral prayer, this should be honoured. If there is no guardian appointed for the dead from amongst his relatives, then, if the dead is a woman, her husband will be her guardian, otherwise, the inhabitants of the Mohallah who are her neighbours. If the funeral prayer for the dead has once been said, the duty of performing it will be regarded as finished. Now, there will be no funeral prayer again. If the bier reaches the graveyard at the time of the evening prayer, the funeral prayer should be performed after saying Fard prayer, and after that, the Sunan would be observed. The same are the conditions for saying funeral prayer as are applied to the voluntary prayer. And the omissions, which render the obligatory invalid, also affect the funeral prayer in the like manner. The intention for the funeral prayer is made in these words "I perform this duty for Allah by turning my face towards the Holy Ka'ba, and that I follow this Imam in the prayer." And if he intends only to the effect that 'I follow this Imam', then it is also

correct. For the funeral prayer, it is essential that the corpse should be put in the front and it is propitious that there should be only three lines for the prayer. For instance, if there are only seven men, the one would be Imam and the first row would consist of three persons while the remaining two rows will consist of two men and one man respectively. And the Imam should stand in front of the chest of the dead. There are four Takbirs (Allah-o-Akbar) (God is the Greatest) in the Funeral prayer. Even if one Takbir is left, it should have to be said once again. The manner in which the funeral prayer has to be performed is this: Firstly, we should, by raising our hands upto the ears, say: "God is the Greatest." After this, we should say: "O Allah! Thou art Innocent. We recite Thy Sacredness and Thy Paise. And Thy Name is auspicious. And Thy Greatness is sublime (exalted). And there is no god save Thee." Then, after saying: "Allah is the Greatest," we should recite the 'Darud' which we should have learnt by heart. Then after saying: "Allah is the Greatest," we should recite the following prayer:

> "O Allah! Forgive our living and the dead, and those who are present and those who are not present, and the young and the elder, and the men and women! O Allah! Whom Thou keepest alive, keep him as such on 'Islam', and upon whom Thou bringst death from amongst us, cause him with faith."

And a person, who does not know the above prayer, he should say any other prayer which he remembers. Then, he should say Allah is the Greatest. If the dead is a boy, the following prayer should be

recited:

> "O Allah! Send this boy ahead of us for our salvation. And make him the source of our intercession."

And if the dead is a girl, the following prayer should be recited:

> "O Allah! Make this girl go ahead of us for the sake of our salvation. And make her the source of our intercession."

And who does not know this prayer, he should say other prayer known to him. Then, after saying: "Allah is the Greatest", he should finish the prayer. Only the Imam should say, "Allah is the Greatest" in a loud voice and the followers should recite it in a low voice. And a person, who reaches in the middle of the prayer, should remain standing and join as soon as the Imam says: "Allah is the Greatest." And when Imam finishes the prayer, he shall have to finish the prayer after saying the remaining "Takbirs" that is Allah is the Greatest If the biers are many it is valid to say the funeral prayer for each of them separately or to say their funeral prayer collectively by placing all of them in the front. It is appropriate to observe the funeral prayer in an open field, in the 'Id ground and also in the house. However, it is not proper to say this prayer in a mosque where congregational prayers are observed. However, there is no harm in saying the funeral prayer in a mosque if it is raining.

In the Description of the Grave and the Burial

The burial of the dead is Fard-i-Kafaya. The

grave is of two kinds : One is called 'Lahad' that is a niched grave, and the other one is called 'Sanduqchi' a small box. Lahad is made like this: After preparing the grave, a pit is dug lengthwise on the side of the West just like a canal into which the corpse is placed. This type of grave is in conformity with the tradition of the Messenger of Allah (mercy and blessing be upon him). To dig out a grave in the shape of a small box at a place where the earth is soft is also lawful. And the 'Sanduqchi' grave is prepared in this manner. After preparing the grave, a pit is dug lengthwise in the centre of the grave in the form of a canal, and then the corpse is placed into it. After this, it should have to be closed by putting on it a board upon which clay should be poured. The depth of the grave should be upto the level of a man's chest. If it is as deep as the height of man it is more desirable. And the width of it should be half of a man's length. The men lowering down the corpse into the grave should be strong, pious and God-fearing. At the outset, the corpse should be placed in the grave by putting it at the western edge of the grave and then at the time of lowering down the corpse into the grave, we should recite :—

In the name of Allah and for (One) following the religion of Allah's Messenger.

If the dead body is that of the woman, and the men, lowering her body in the grave, are the *mahrams* of the dead, it is desirable. And the grave should be covered with a curtain as corpse of a woman is lowered and then the corpse of a woman should be lowered. The corpse be placed into the grave on the right side in such a manner that the face of the dead should be towards

'Qibla' and the knots of the shroud should then be loosened and the 'Lahad' (armpit) be closed with 'kachi' bricks or with bamboo and the clay should be poured over it and the other clay should not be mixed with it.

And it is better if the clay is poured into the grave from the upper side. And every person should put clay over it for three times. For the first time of throwing clay into the grave, he should say:

It is with this that We created you.

For the secoud time he should say:

It is to this that We would cause you to return.

For the third time, he should recite:

And it is out of this that we would bring you forth for the second time.

Then the grave should be raised in the customary manner and water sprinkled over it. It is prohibited to make the grave in the form of a terrace (a platform) or to do mortar work on it. And it is also prohibited to construct a mosque or house over the grave, and to sit or to sleep on it, or to walk over it or to relieve one's self on it or to set up the stone over it and inscribe anything on that. And it is preferable to sit near the grave after the burial and recite the Holy Qur'an and beseech for the forgiveness of the dead as well as the grant of reward in his favour so that his suffering may be alleviated. We should continue to visit the graves and pray for reward in favour of the souls of the dead after reciting what we can. If a person dies during the course of a journey, it is desirable to bury him in a graveyard situated nearby. And it is plausible to bury the dead in a graveyard

only. To cut the grass of the graveyard and also to cut down fresh branches of its trees are not desirable acts.

In the Description of Visiting the Graves.

To visit graves every week is laudable and for this purpose, Friday, Saturday, Monday and Thursday are excellent. To visit the graves on the eve of 'Shab-i-Barat' (the fifteenth night of Sha'ban), during ten days of 'Zilhijjah' (the last month of Muslim calendar) and on the days of 'Id' as well as during the first ten days of 'Muharram' is also desirable. Muhammad b. Wasi (peace be upon him) has said: "The dead recognizes those who visit the graves on Thursday and Friday." The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to go to Medina every year in order to visit the graves of the martyrs of 'Uhud' and, after him Hadrat Abu Bakr and Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with them) used to visit these graves. Allama Ibn Hajar 'Asqalani has written that it is a great mistake to forsake the visiting of graves on the grounds that some visitors of the graves indulge in innovations in religion or that there is the gathering of the women along with men there. The visiting of the graves and the struggle to prevent and stop these vices should continue simultaneously. If an aged woman goes to visit the grave with an intention to remember death and to pray for others or for the reward of virtue in the Hereafter, this act of hers is lawful. When a person makes up his mind to visit the graves, it is preferable that he should first observe two raka's of voluntary prayer and in each raka' after reciting Sura

Fatiha (1) he should recite 'Ayat-ul-Kursi' once and Sura (113) say: 'Allah is One,' thrice and pray for its reward in favour of the dead. Almighty God illuminates the grave of the dead because of this act of devotion besides conferring upon him huge reward for it. He should then walk straight to the graveyard by taking off his shoes and then by standing in front of the grave with his back towards the Holy Mecca, he should recite as under:

"O occupants of the graves! May peace be on you! May Allah grant us forgiveness and you too. You are our predecessors and we are your successors. Then he should pray by reciting whatever he can for the reward in favour of the dead. And if possible he should recite Sura Fatiha, Sura 'Alif Lam Mim' upto Mufl-hoon and 'Ayatul Kursi', and also the concluding verses of Sura al-Baqara from 'Aminar-Rasul' to the end of this Sura as well as Sura Ya Sin, Sura 'the Sovereignty', Sura Rivalry in worldly increase, and Sura: Say Allah is One, either eleven times or seven times, and should say: O Allah, confer its reward upon such and such dead. Abu Bakr b. Sa'id says: It is preferable that he should send reward after reciting Sura: 'Say! Allah is One', either five or seven times. If the dead is a sinner, he will be granted forgiveness and if he is pious, the reciter will be favoured with forgiveness. The religious scholars have said that a person who says voluntary prayers with a view to seeking reward from Allah for all the believing persons—male and female every one of them gets its full reward and there is also no reduction in the reward of the person who prays. The same is the faith of those

who belong to the Sunnat wal Jama'at.

After the death of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) used to perform 'Umra for the sake of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). And Ibn-i-Mufiq performed seventy pilgrimages (Hajj) for the sake of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). And Ibn-i-Siraj recited the Holy Qur'an for ten thousand times for the sake of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Benefit

It is quite desirable to visit the home of the bereaved person. And it is also a source of reward for the neighbours, the relatives and intimate friends of the dead to go for offering condolences to the bereaved family. They should exhort the members of the bereaved family, both young and old, to show patience and resignation. They must be exhorted in these words : 'May Allah forgive the dead and forgive his/her sins'. May Allah bless him/her with His mercy and grant you the strength to endure this loss. For condolence, the members of the bereaved family should make arrangements for sitting either in their own house or in the mosque. We should visit the home of the dead either for one day or for two or three days, and induce the members of the bereaved household to resign themselves to the will of God. To weep in fulsome manner, to tear the clothes, to beat the face or the chest, to throw dust on the head and the wearing of black clothes by men—all these are the rites of ignorance. We should shun them. However, there is no harm if the bereaved person weeps in his heart and sheds tears. It is lawful that the neighbours and the relatives of the dead should send food for the bereaved family for a day or two ; and that custom is unlawful according to which members of the bereaved family cook food on the third or fourth day and then invite the neighbours and the relatives of the deceased to partake of the meal. Such a custom should be abandoned. The excellent way is that this food should be cooked on everyday according to convenience of the family and the poor and the needy be invited to eat it so that the dead person may receive reward thereby.

Some of the important instructions in regard to Burial

(1) Giving of bath to the corpse of a person who is drowned in river, becomes a religious duty, as soon as it is discovered from the river. Drowning in water does not absolve the responsibility of bathing, so he should be given bath again. However, if the corpse is caused to move into the water at the time of its bringing out of water with the intention of giving it a bath for the grave, then the washing of it would be presumed to have been performed. Similarly, if water is poured on the dead or it somehow or the other reaches it, even then the washing of the corpse would remain obligatory.

(2) If only the head of a dead is found, it would not be given bath for the grave but would have to be buried as it is. If more than half portion of the dead body is found lying somewhere, its washing for

the grave would be obligatory whether it is with or without head. And if it is not more than half but is only half then, in case it is with head, its washing would have to be performed, otherwise not.

(3) If the dead body is found and it is not ascertained from the neighbourhood as to whether the dead was a Muslim or non-believer, then, if this incident has taken place in the land of Islam (that is where the Muslim population form the majority) it would have to be washed for the grave and the funeral prayer be performed.

(4) If the dead bodies of Muslims are found intermixed with the non-believers, and distinction among them cannot be made, then all these would have to be washed for the grave and if distinction is made, then the dead bodies of the Muslims would have to be separated and given bath for the grave.

(5) If a relative of a Muslim, who is a non-believer, meets death, his corpse would have to be handed over to his co-religionists. If there is found no co-religionist of his or if there is one, but he refuses to accept him, then that Muslim is obliged to give bath to that non-believer which would not be given according to the law of Shari'ah. In other words, the Muslim would neither perform his ablution, nor cleanse his head nor rub camphor on his body, but, it would have to be washed in the same manner in which dirty things are washed, and a non-believer is not purified by this washing.

(6) If an apostate dies, he should not be given bath for the grave and, if his co-religionists demand his corpse, it should not be handed over to them.

(7) If a dead, due to non-availability of water, caused to perform "Tayammum" and is purified with sand or dust he should be washed in case water is found afterwards.

(8) Funeral Prayer. If filth secretes out of the dead body and it becomes impure, it does not matter. The funeral prayer is supposed to be performed.

(9) If the dead is buried without giving him bath or after giving him "Tayammum", and clay has been poured into his grave, then it is lawful to say prayer at the grave in the same condition.

(10) If a Muslim is buried without funeral prayer having been observed over him, it should be said uptil that time when his body is thought to be lying intact. This differs from place to place, its limit cannot be therefore, fixed. The same is most correct.

(11) If there is no genuine cause, the bier should not be carried to the graveyard in the carriage, but in case of real need, it is permissible.

(12) If the grave with a niche in the side cannot be easily dug, the dead body may be buried by placing it in the box—may it be made of wood or iron or stone.

(13) Purdah should be preferably observed while lowering the dead body of the woman in the grave, but if there is an apprehension of her body being exposed, then it becomes obligatory.

(14) It is not permissible to erect tomb over the grave.

(15) It is not lawful to inscribe anything on the grave in order to perpetuate the memory of the dead.

(16) When the clay has been poured into the

grave, it is unlawful to dig out the dead body. However, if a person has been wronged, it is lawful to do this.

EXAMPLES

(17) Where the land into which the dead has been buried belongs to another person and he is not permitting his burial there.

(18) When the goods of some person have been left into the grave.

(19) If a woman dies with a living baby in her womb the child should be brought out by operating upon her belly.

(20) To carry the corpse for burial from one place to another is not very desirable unless the second place of burial is situated farther than one or two miles. If the distance is more than this, it is not valid. And to dig out the buried corpse and carry it away is absolutely unlawful.

(21) The condolence after three days is not at all desirable. But if the people calling for condolence or relatives of the dead are on a journey and arrive after three days, the condolence in such a case, is allowed even after three days.

(22) To keep ready the shroud is permissible. To have the grave ready before death is, however, very objectionable.

This is the Reality of the World

May Almighty God be Merciful to you ! Be aware of your negligence and awaken yourselves from slumber before such time when a noise is heard that

such a person has fallen ill ; that his condition is precarious ; that the physicians; have been called in. The physicians and doctors will no doubt be called for you but no one will give you the guarantee of life. Then there will be a cry that he is making will. Look! His voice becomes inaudible. Now he is not recognizing any one. He has started panting for breath. His groaning has increased. The eyelashes are drooping. This will be the moment when you will become well aware of the Hereafter, but, your tongue would falter and you would not be able to say anything. The friends and relatives, standing there, will be weeping. Now, there appears before you your son, then comes your brother and lastly your wife. But the tongue has become speechless. In the meanwhile, every part of your body will start becoming lifeless and, at last, you will breathe your last and your soul will reach the heaven. Your kith and kin will make arrangements for your immediate burial. The visitors would observe silence after lamentation. Your enemies would rejoice. Your relatives would be absorbed in dividing the goods left behind by you while you are held accountable for your deeds.

This is the reality of his mortal life.

THE CONDITIONS OF BARZAKH

The grave is either the garden of Paradise or the pit of Hell-Fire. O People, make your graves as gardens of Paradise by doing righteous deeds ; and do not make your graves the pits of Hell-Fire by doing evil deeds.

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and blessings be upon the best of His creation, Muhammad, the Chief of Prophets, and upon his progeny and upon his companions and those guided aright through the firm faith and those who followed them earnestly up to the Day of Resurrection.

From the teachings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) it becomes clear that after the demise of a person we apparently take him to be lifeless, but he remains alive, although his life is different from our lives. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that the act of breaking a bone of the dead body causes him as much pain as is felt by a living person. One day the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw Hadrat Amr b. Hazm

(Allah be pleased with him) leaning over a grave. He forbade him to vex the dead body.

When a man dies, he is consigned from this world to *Barzakh*. Regardless of the fact whether the dead body is laid in the grave or cremated, he retains the power of understanding and comprehension. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that when the corpse is put in the bier and the people carry the dead body to the graveyard, if he is a pious person, he requests them to carry him as fast as they can and if he is a wrong-doer, he curses the wretchedness in store for him and asks where he is being led to. He is also reported to have said that except human beings everything else hears the cries of the dead body. If a man were to hear the cries of the dead body, he would faint. The interval between death and the Day of Resurrection is called *Barzakh*. The literal meaning of *Barzakh* is obstruction or barrier. Since this period is a barrier between this world and the life Hereafter, it is called *Barzakh*.

Since the people usually bury the dead body, there is only the word "grave" which finds mention in the traditions in regard to happiness or punishment of *Barzakh*. This does not mean that those who are cremated or cast adrift in the river do not remain alive in *Barzakh*. The fact is that reward and punishment pertain to soul. It may also be remembered that the Almighty Allah is so Potent that He can assemble the scattered particles in order to inflict punishment. According to a tradition a sinful person while dying, advised his sons to cremate half of his dead body after

his death and scatter his ashes in the air and flow the other half in the sea. After that he expressed his apprehensions that God would restore him to life in spite of the precaution he had taken for his safety. He would give him awful punishment which would be more grievous than the punishment borne by any other man. When he died, his sons acted upon his advice. Then God commanded the sea to assemble all the particles that it contained. The sea did that. Similarly, the air, in obedience to the command of God, assembled all the parts that it contained. The Almighty God gathered together all the particles and restored him to life and asked him why did he make such a will. He submitted that he had done so for fear of Him and He was best Knower. God forgave him. God forgives those who fear Him.

From the tradition it is also clear that the believers in *Barzakh* not only pay a visit to one another but also ask the new entrants about the condition of their acquaintances in the world.

Hadrat Sa'id b. Jubair (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said : "When a man dies, the members of his family in *Barzakh* welcome him in the same way as the living persons receive a man in the world on his return from a foreign country." Hadrat Shabit Banani (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said : "When a man dies his relatives in *Barzakh*, who are already dead, surround him and feel much greater pleasure in meeting him than that felt by a living person in the world at the time of receiving a man on his return from a foreign country." Hadrat Qais b. Qabisah (Allah be pleased with him)

is reported to have said : "The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) disclosed on one occasion that a disbeliever could not speak to the dead. Somebody asked him whether the dead could converse with one another. He replied in the affirmative and added that they also pay a visit to one another.

In the Description of *Barzakh*

The literal meaning of the word *Barzakh* is 'barrier between two things'. From religious point of view *Barzakh* is the period which intervenes between this world and the life Hereafter commencing immediately after the death of a man and ending on the Day of Resurrection. As soon as a man dies, he enters *Barzakh*.

God by His Divine Power and Sound Judgement, created Adam (blessings of Allah be upon him) from dust and taught him the name of everything, glorified his position by enjoining upon the angels to fall down before him in prostration and He made his abode in paradise, caused him to fall down on the earth with a view to fulfilling the purpose for which He had created him. In this way, his first lodging was paradise, the second was the world, the third was *Barzakh* and the fourth again paradise. The first dwelling place of his offspring is the belly of mother, the second is the world, the third is *Barzakh* and the fourth is either paradise or hell. God allotted appropriate functions for each abode and called the world a field for practical work and a cultivation ground for the Hereafter. He bestowed a great favour upon man by sending prophets for guidance in order to enable humanity to dis-

criminate between right and wrong. Those who followed the teachings of the prophets and were known as believers and those who went astray were called disbelievers. The interval between Death and Resurrection is called *Barzakh*. During this period a believer feels happy whereas a disbeliever suffers torments. The real reward or punishment will be given on the Day of Judgement after due reckoning.

Origin of Death

Hadrat Hasan (blessings of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that when God created Adam (blessings of Allah be upon him) and his progeny, the angels humbly pointed out to God that the offspring of Adam would not be accommodated on the earth. God proclaimed that He would then bring death into Being. The angels said that if He created death they would not be able to lead a pleasant life. God proclaimed that He shall inspire them with hope (Ibne Abi Shaiba).

Mujahid (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that when Adam (blessings of Allah be upon him) was caused to fall down on the earth, God enjoined upon him to construct for destruction and to beget children for death. (Abu Naeem)

O then who dwell in the highest palace, you will soon be buried in dust. An angel makes an announcement daily "Give birth to the children for death and fashion them for destruction".

Under the Grave

When a pious man dies, he is made to sit by the

angels. He attains a position that neither anxiety nor grief overtakes him. First of all, a question pertaining to Islam is put to him. After that he is asked about the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). He says that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had brought clear signs from God and that he believed those signs to be true in their entirety. After that he is shown a place in hell which presents scene of pandemonium. Then diverting his attention to the scene, he is told that God had saved him from that punishment. After that he is shown a place in paradise, richly bedecked and elegantly adorned, where he observes pleasant sights. Then he is told that he would be given the very abode when he would be brought after the Last Day since during his life in the world, he believed in the Last Day and he died when he held the same belief, so on the Day of Resurrection, he would be resurrected from the grave in the very same state.

When a wicked man dies, he is seated in the grave but he is overwhelmed with anxiety and fear. The same questions that have been mentioned above, are put to him. He says that he knows nothing about anything. He used to repeat what he heard from the people. At first, the gate of paradise is opened. After displaying its adornment and elegance, and all riches contained therein, he is told that it was his original dwelling place. But it had been denied to him. Then a spectacle of hell is shown to him. He observes there a state of pandemonium. Then he is informed that he would be given that abode because during his life in the world he entertained doubts and

died in the same state, so, on the Day of Resurrection, he would be resurrected from the grave in the same state.

Hadrat Abu Qatada (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that one day a funeral procession happened to pass by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). When the latter saw it, he remembered that either that man would feel pleasure or would cause others to feel pleasure. He explained that it is after death that a believer feels pleasure when he is relieved of the worldly worries and troubles to find place in the neigbourhood of the Almighty God. This was the case of a man who feels pleasure. On the death of a worng-doer, the other men, inhabiting towns and villages and the trees and animals feel pleasure since with his death the creation is relieved of the calamities which fall upon the earth because of his outburst of riots in the cities; the trees dry up and the animals hardly get fodder. It is for this reason that on his death all feel pleasure because evil shadow of his sins create troubles for everyone.

Hadrat Ibn 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that once the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) caught hold of his shoulder and advised him to live in the world like a stranger or like a traveller. Hadrat Ibn 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that at dawn one should not wait for night and at night one should not wait for dawn. When one enjoys good health, one should make provision for combating with disease (because during the period of his illness) he would be getting reward for his good

deeds done in the state of health, so one should make provision for death.

The Cry of the Grave

Hadrat Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that once he, in the company of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), joined a funeral party. When the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) reached the graveyard, he went to a grave and told that there was not a single day that the grave did not make the clear announcement. "O, the offspring of Adam ! You have forgotten me, I am a place of solitude, I am an abode of loneliness, I am a lodging of wilderness, I am a dwelling place of worms and I am much straitened provided the Almighty expands me in the case of a person whom He holds in esteem. After that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: The grave is either one out of the gardens of paradise or one of the pits of hell.

Horrors of the Grave

Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said : One day when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came to the mosque, some people were grinning with delight. He said : Had they remembered death (which brings pleasures to an end) they would have refrained from indulging in things that excite laughter. The grave of every one makes this announcement daily, "I am a place of solitude, I am a lodging of wilderness, I am a dwelling place of worms". When a beli-

ever is buried, the grave says "I welcome your suspicious arrival. I am pleased to meet you. Of all the men who passed by me, I liked you most. You have come to me today. I will show you how I shall treat you." After that the grave expands to such an extent that the dead body finds open space as far as his eyes can see, and a window opening towards paradise, sending out breeze and sweet fragrance. When a wicked or a disbeliever dies, the grave says, "Your arrival is evil. I am displeased to meet you. Of all the men who passed by me, I disliked you most. You have come to me today. I will show you how I treat you." After saying so, the grave becomes narrow to such an extent that his bones and ribs of one side pierce into those of the other side. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) demonstrated it by putting and pressing the fingers of one hand into those of the other hand. Then seventy serpents begin to bite him, which are so venomous that if one of them were to sting the earth, it would not grow grass till the Last Day. All these serpents will continue to sting him till the Last Day. After that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) remarked, "Grave is either one of the gardens of paradise or is one of the pits of hell." Hadart Ibn 'Umar (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that a man asked the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to tell him as to who was the wisest and the most cautious of all men. The latter told : It was the man who always remembered death in the world and who always made preparations for death. Such are the people who are

honoured not only in this world but also in the life Hereafter.

Episode of Hadrat 'Umar b. 'Abdul 'Aziz

One day Haḍrat 'Umar b. 'Abdul 'Aziz (Allah be pleased with him) joined a funeral party. When he reached the graveyard, he went to a remote place and sat there and began to think about something. Somebody, addressing the Caliph, enquired the reason of his sitting alone at a place especially when he was the guardian of this dead body. He told him that he had come there at the call of the grave. The grave had spoken to him the following words : "O 'Umar b. 'Abdul 'Aziz, why don't you ask me the manner in which I welcome those who come to meet me. Haḍrat 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Aziz (Allah be pleased with him) asked the grave to tell that. The grave said : "I snatch their coffins and tear their bodies into pieces, suck their blood and eat their flesh. Shall I tell you how I disembody the joints of a dead body? I separate the shoulders from the arms, the arms from the wrists, the hips from the body, the hips from the thighs, the thighs from the bones, the knees from the shanks and the shanks from the feet." After saying that, Haḍrat 'Umar b. 'Abdul 'Aziz (Allah be pleased with him) began to weep and said: The stay in the world is short-lived but its allurements are many. Who is honoured in the world is dishonoured in the life Hereafter, who is wealthy here, is a beggar there. He who is young is bound to decay and he who is alive is bound to die. One should keep himself away from it lest it should deceive him because it turns

away its face very soon. Foolish is he who is taken in by its baits. Where are those who were enamoured of it and who populated big cities, dug canals, planted big gardens and departed after staying for a short time? They always thought of their sound health but the improvement in health provoked the lusts of the flesh in them and they indulged in committing sins. Their abundant wealth was an envy of all men in the world. Even though they had to face difficulties, yet they amassed large sums of money. The people were jealous of them but they went on accumulating wealth. They bore troubles ungrudgingly for the sake of amassing wealth. The lust has deformed their bodies. The worms have eaten up, their joints and bones. They used to take rest on comfortable beds, exalted thrones and cosy cushions and had a train of attendants to wait on them. Their friends, relatives and neighbours were always ready to flatter them. Can anybody tell about the hardships borne by them ? The poor, the rich, all are lying on the same ground. Where is the wealth of the wealthy ? Has his wealth helped him? Has the poverty of the beggar harmed him ? What has become of their fluent tongues? What has become of their eyes which used to roll in their sockets in all directions? What has become of their soft skins, beautiful and good-looking faces and their tender bodies? What a ruin worms have wrought to their bodies—their complexion—turning dark, their flesh being eaten up, their mouths covered with dust, limbs disembodied and joints broken. Where are their servants, who attended them and were at their beck and call ? Where are their apartments where

they used to take rest ? Where are their treasures of wealth, which they had amassed ? Neither did their attendants make provision for their food enabling them to eat it in the grave, nor did they provided him with a bed and a pillow. They threw him on the ground without any tree or a plant of flower to cast shade upon him. Now they are lying forlorn in darkness. They remain unaffected whether it is day or night. They can neither meet friends nor call any one of them. What a change their tender figures have undergone ! The bodies of all men and women are decomposed. Their limbs are disembodied, their eyes get out of their sockets, their necks are separated, their mouths are filled with water and pus and the worms and insects crawl in all parts of their bodies. They are in a deplorable condition and their wives have been bound to nuptial ties with another person and have been enjoying themselves. Their sons have taken possession of their properties and the inheritors have distributed the property. But there are also fortunate beings who are enjoying themselves in the grave, their countenances are fresh. These are the same people who remembered this home (grave) while lying in a home of deception (world) and preferred to meet the demands of the Hereafter to the demands of the mortal world, and made the provision and preparations for a journey towards the grave. When a man is destined to die sooner or later, he should not entangle himself into the allurements of the world. Does he think that the world will stand by him ? Does he think that he will live for ever in this transient world?

When the angel of death approaches him nobody

away its face very soon. Foolish is he who is taken in by its baits. Where are those who were enamoured of it and who populated big cities, dug canals, planted big gardens and departed after staying for a short time? They always thought of their sound health but the improvement in health provoked the lusts of the flesh in them and they indulged in committing sins. Their abundant wealth was an envy of all men in the world. Even though they had to face difficulties, yet they amassed large sums of money. The people were jealous of them but they went on accumulating wealth. They bore troubles ungrudgingly for the sake of amassing wealth. The lust has deformed their bodies. The worms have eaten up, their joints and bones. They used to take rest on comfortable beds, exalted thrones and cosy cushions and had a train of attendants to wait on them. Their friends, relatives and neighbours were always ready to flatter them. Can anybody tell about the hardships borne by them ? The poor, the rich, all are lying on the same ground. Where is the wealth of the wealthy ? Has his wealth helped him? Has the poverty of the beggar harmed him ? What has become of their fluent tongues? What has become of their eyes which used to roll in their sockets in all directions? What has become of their soft skins, beautiful and good-looking faces and their tender bodies? What a ruin worms have wrought to their bodies—their complexion—turning dark, their flesh being eaten up, their mouths covered with dust, limbs disembodied and joints broken. Where are their servants, who attended them and were at their beck and call ? Where are their apartments where

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When the angel of death approaches him nobody

will save him from his clutches. He is bound to leave behind him in the world his huge building, the ripe fruit of his gardens, his cosy cushions and his summer and winter suits. Sweat will stream down his body. He will feel thirsty and the agonies of death will make him toss in the bed.

The man, who today on the death of his brother, his son, his father, shuts their eyes, who on one occasion washes the dead body and shrouds it in the coffin, while on other occasion participates in the funeral gathering and lays the dead body in the grave, must bear in mind that he will pass through the same trial tomorrow. Then Hadrat 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Aziz (Allah be pleased with him) quoted two verses, the translation of which is given below :

> "The man always runs after a thing which is bound to perish, and is engrossed in high hopes and great expectations. He does not know that day-dreams can never be realized. He spends his day in forgetfulness and passes his day in unmindfulness and passes his night in slumber, while death is hovering over his head. He will repent of what he is doing today. He is leading his life like that of animals."

It is said that hardly a week had elapsed after this incident when Hadrat 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Aziz (Allah be pleased with him) passed away.

The Reward of a Believer and Disgrace of a Disbeliever Before and After Death

When Hadrat Jabir bin Ziyad (Allah be pleased with him) was on the verge of death, somebody

enquired from him what was his last wish. He said he wanted to meet Hadrat Hasan Basri (Allah be pleased with him). When the latter came, the people announced his arrival. Hadrat Jabir (Allah be pleased with him) said: He was departing not knowing whether he would find place in paradise or in hell. Hadrat Tamim Dari (mercy be upon him) is reported to have said: The Almighty enjoins the angel of death to approach His slave and to disembody his soul so as to relieve him of the worldly troubles because he had been tried in his joy and sorrow and had come upto His expectation. The angel of death, in the company of five hundred angels, approaches him. Each angel carries in his hand a coffin of paradise and a bouquet of sweet-smelling flowers, containing twenty different colours and each colour diffusing diverse smell. In addition they carry a white silky handkerchief which emits the fragrance of musk The angel of death sits by the side of his head whereas the other angels surround him, touch his limbs, keep the musk-scented handkerchief below his chin and open the gate of paradise before his very eyes. They keep him amused with different kinds of things belonging to paradise in the same way as the parents keep a weeping child amused with different toys. At one time, the virgins of paradise are brought before his eyes, at another the fruits of the Garden of Paradise are offered to him and still at other time elegant dresses are presented to him. His celestial brides begin to play with him. After seeing different scenes, his soul throbs in the body in an ecstasy of delight just as a bird flutters its wings in a cage. Then the angel of

death says, "O suspicious soul, go where there are thornless lote-trees, clustered plantains, spreading shades and water gushing."

This is a reference to the verses of Sura Al-Waq'ia of the Holy Qur'an. The angel of death speaks to him as politely as a mother speaks to her baby because the angel knows that he is one of those who have been brought nigh to the Almighty. He treats the soul mildly because he thinks the Almighty would be pleased with him. The soul is extracted from the body as easily as a hair is picked from flour. When the soul separates, all the angels bow down to him in reverence and give him glad tidings to enter the Garden of Delight, which is referred to in Sura Nahl of the Holy Qur'an. If the man is one of those who are brought nigh, the reward mentioned in the verses of Sura Al-Waq'ia, "Then happiness and a Garden of bliss." (56 : 89). When the soul separates from body it says to the body: "The Almighty may reward you for the good works. You were prompt in worshipping and obeying God. You scorned to disobey Him. May this day be good to you! You have not only escaped from the pangs of death but also kept me safe from the agonies of death." The body also utters the same words at the time of separation of the soul. At that time those places of the earth where he had worshipped, begin to mourn the loss of that man, those gates of heaven through which his deeds and his livelihood used to pass begin to weep. After that five hundred angels gather near the corpse. As the persons performing ablutions of the dead body turn over his side, the

angels do so immediately. Before the men shroud him in the coffin, the angels cover him immediately with the coffin brought by them. Before the men sprinkle scent on him, the angels sprinkle the perfume brought by them. After doing so, the angels stand in a row on both sides beginning from the door of his house to the grave and saying the funeral prayer and seeking forgiveness of God, they give him cordial reception. Looking at these scenes satan weeps so bitterly. He curses the legion of his followers for sparing him. They say: "He was innocent."

After this, when the angel of death takes his soul in the upper regions. Hadrat Gabriel (peace be upon him) receives him with seventy-thousand angels. These angels convey to him the glad tidings in obedience to the command of the Almighty. After this, the angel of death carries him to Empyrean. As soon as the soul reaches there, it bows down in prostration. Almighty God commands the angel of death that the soul of His bondman should be carried to a place where there are thornless lote-trees and clustered banana trees. When his corpse is laid in the grave, his Prayer stands by his right side, his Fast stands by the left side, his Recitation of the Holy Qur'an and Glorification of God stand by the side of his head, the steps he traversed for congregational prayer stand by the side of his feet and his fortitude (in adversity and abstinence from sins) stand close to the grave. After that Torment of the grave stretches its neck and strives to reach the dead body. But when it attacks the right side, Prayers come to his rescue and keep the chastisement off swearing that he was the man who always

bore hardship in the world and did not enjoy a sound sleep. Then the Torment attacks the left side, Fast thwarts its attempt and removes it away. Then it tries to reach the head, but the Recitation of the Holy Qur'an and Glorification of God prevent it from causing hurt to him. In short, it does not find way from any side to reach the dead body because his good works guard him against any attack, circumvent all plans of Torment and, therefore, it cannot touch the slave of God. When the Torment is rendered helpless he goes away. After this, Patience, which stands in a corner says to his Good Deeds that he was waiting for the opportune time to come to aid in case any side happened to be weak, to counteract the attack (due to some lacuna in adoration). But thanks God, they have succeeded in repelling the attack of the Torment. He would help at the time of weighing (the deeds).

After that the angels approach the dead body. Their eyes glitter like a flash of lightning and their voice is as loud as a thunder. Their canine teeth are like the cow's horns. When they exhale the flames come out from their mouths. Their hair is so long that it hangs down to their feet. Their shoulders are so broad that the distance from one shoulder to the other, could be covered in a journey of several days. Tenderness and mildness is alien to their nature (but they do not treat the believers harshly, their outward appearance is sufficient to cause dread). They are called *Munker Nakir*. Each one of them has so huge and heavy hammer in his hands that if all human beings and jinns were to lift it, they could not be able to remove it even, coming near the dead body, they

order him to sit down. As soon as the dead body sits down, his coffin loosens and reaches his hips. They put questions as to who is his Creator, what is the name of his Prophet ? The dead body answers that his Creator is Allah, Who is One and has no peer. (He is the sole Owner and has no Partner). His religion is Islam, his prophet is Mohammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who is the last of the prophets. They both say that he has spoken the truth. Soon after they remove the barrier from all sides as a result of which the grave expands. After that, the angels order the dead body to raise his head. When he raises his head, he sees a gate through which he is shown paradise. Then they say to the slave of God that that very place was his abode because he had obeyed the commands of God. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is reported to have sworn by Divine Power and the Omnipotent that the dead body feels immense pleasure which can never return. After that, the angels ask him to look at his feet where he sees a gate of hell (which shows his condition). The angels say to the slave of God that he was safe from that door. At that time the dead body feels immense pleasure which can never return. After that, seventy gates open towards paradise through which cool breeze and fragrance enter the grave. This state will continue till the Last Day. The predicament of the other is detailed below :

The Almighty enjoins that the angel of death should approach His sworn enemy, and after taking away his soul he should bring it before Him so that He should punish him, because in spite of the fact

that He had bestowed His blessings on him (in the world) in abundance, he persisted in His disobedience. The angel of death makes his dreadful appearance before him. He has twelve eyes. In his hands he holds a forked mace (a big iron rod) made of Fire of hell. He is accompanied by five hundred angels who have a piece of copper, and hold in their hands huge embers of the Fire of hell and scourges of burning fire As soon as the angel of death comes near him, he strikes him with the mace. Its forks pierce his body. When he draws it out, the other angels begin to lash him on his head and hips and as a result the dead body swoons. Having extracted his soul from the toes, they stop it in the ankle and give him a sound beating. Then they extract it from the ankle and stop it in the knees and then after extracting it from the knees they stop it in the belly (they stop the soul from joint to joint so as to torture the dead body for a fairly long time). They extract the soul from the belly and stop it in the breast. Then the angels keep the piece of copper and the burning embers of hell below his chin and the angel of death says : "O the accursed soul ! Come out to go to hell". (For reference, the verse of Sura Al-Waqi'a may be seen in the Holy Qur'an). The translation of the verse is as under :

> "In scorching wind and scalding water, and shadow of black smoke, neither cool nor refreshing".

When the soul separates from his body, it says to the body, "Let the Almighty pay you in the same coins. You were prompt in disobeying the commands of Allah and scorned to obey Him. You have ruined yourself

and have ruined me too". The body also utters the same words to the soul. Those spots of the earth where he committed sins curse him. The legion of the followers of Satan run to their ringleader *Iblis* to break the news that they had caused a man to suffer eternal Hell-Fire. When he is laid in the grave, the grave straitens to such an extent that the ribs of one side pierce the ribs of the other side. There come black serpents which begin to sting his nose and toe and continue to do so till the serpents of both sides meet in the middle. Then two angels who are called *Munker Nakir* (whose outward appearance has already been described) come and put him question : Who is his Creator, what is his religion and who is his prophet? He expresses his ignorance over each question and the angels strike him with a mace so violently that the sparks of the mace spread in the grave. After that, they order him to look up. He looks up to see an opened gate of paradise (through which he seeks a fine spectacle of paradise). The angels say, "O enemy of Allah, had you obeyed the commands of Allah, you would have been given that abode. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) swore by the Omnipotent that at that time he feels so intense grief the like of which he would not feel at any other occasion. Then the gate of hell is opened and angels say : This is the abode of those who are the enemies of Allah.

The Grave and the Dead

A venerable old man is reported to have said that he prayed to Allah for unravelling to him the mystery

of the dead. One night he visualised that the Day of Resurrection had been established and the dead had been coming out of their graves. He found that some dead bodies were reclining on a fine silky brocade (one of the best qualities of silk), some were on a silky cloth, some on exalted thrones, some on flowers while others were laughing and still others were weeping. He wished the Almighty God have placed the dead on an equal footing. A person spoke to the dead that the distinction had been made because of the difference of deeds performed by them. The men with silky brocade, were those who had acquired good habits, the men with silk were the martyrs, the men lying on flowers, were those who used to keep fasts very frequently. The men who were weeping were the sinners and the men of high status (the men reclining on exalted thrones) were those who used to live cheerfully in obedience to the command of the Almighty Allah. There was a shroud-thief who, after exhuming the dead bodies used to snatch their coffins. He dug a grave. No sooner did he dig it than he found a man who was sitting on a high throne, and busy in reciting the Holy Qur'an before him. And underneath the throne a stream was flowing. He was so terrified that he fainted and fell down. The people dragged him out of the grave. When he regained consciousness after three days, they enquired of him the reason for swooning. He narrated the whole story. Some men, who wanted to see the grave, requested him to lead them to that grave. He was ready to do so, but at night he saw that venerable old man in a dream who prohibited him to do so otherwise he would get into grave difficulties. When he awoke from the dream, he decided not to tell anybody about the location of the grave.

Cries of the Dead Body in the Grave and the Instrument of Torture

Hadrat Bra b. 'Azib (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) told that when the disbeliever expresses his ignorance, there is heard a proclamation from heaven that the dead body had told a lie and that the burning fire be spread under him, he should be covered with a dress of fire and the gate of hell be opened. So the gate is opened through which passes the intense heat of hell. The grave of the dead body straitens to such an extent that the ribs of one side penetrate into those of the other side. Then a blind and deaf guard (torturer) is posted to torture him. The tormenter possesses an iron-mace which is so heavy that its one stroke is likely to reduce a mountain to powder. He further told that when the guard hits the dead body with the iron-mace, the latter becomes a part and parcel of dust and the sound produced as a result of hitting, is heard by all the creatures, living between the east and the west except mankind and jinns. After this the soul is sent back.

Bukhari and Muslim are reported to have said that when the dead body is hit with the iron-mace, it cries so loudly that, excepting human beings and jinns, everything near the grave hears that cry.

Here the question arises: What is the reason that the cries of the dead body and the sound produced as a result of hitting the iron-mace, are inaudible to

human beings and jinns. The answer is that human beings and jinns have yet to enter *Barzakh*. If they come to know about the tortures inflicted on the dead body beforehand or if they hear the cries of the dead body, there is every likelihood that they would believe in the truth of revelations and would start doing good works. But what is liked by God is faith in the unseen —that a man would believe in and submit to what he has heard from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) no matter whether he comprehends its reason or not. This is what is meant by 'faith'.

Translation : "Verily, forgiveness and reward are for those who fear their Lord without seeing Him."

If they are shown beforehand what happens in hell, in paradise and in *Barzakh*, the belief in the unseen would become a meaningless term and it is but natural that they will believe in what they see with their own eyes and so they will become believers of that only of what they have seen. But God does not like those who believe in what they see with their own eyes. It is for this reason that faith at the time of death is not acceptable because at that time the dying man can see the angels who inflict torture A reference is made to a verse of Sura Momin. The translation of the verse is "But their faith could not avail them when they saw our Doom". On the Day of Resurrection when they would see paradise and hell, they will affirm their belief in Allah and testify to the truth of the teachings of prophets, but their faith would not avail them.

It may be added that human beings cannot stand

the horrible sight of the tortures of the grave and the heart-rending cries therein. If they were to witness the tortures of the grave or to hear the cries, they would faint. Hadrat Abu Sa'id (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) told that when the people carry the bier of a non-believer, he says : Woe be upon me. Where do you lead me to. His voice is heard by all creatures, except human beings. Should a man hear the cries of the dead, he would faint.

The Lord of the worlds not only apprised the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) of the secrets of *Barzakh* but also showed him all things concerning it, as he had remarkable powers of endurance, so much so that even the sight of hell failed to disturb him. Even on such occasions he laughed, talked or walked, sat and dined with his companions (Allah be pleased with them). Hadrat Abu Ayub (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that one day after sunset the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) went out (of Medina) and heard a (dreadful) voice. He said : The Jews are being tortured in their graves.

Hadrat Zaid bin Thabit (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that they accompanied the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who rode upon a pony to go to a garden which belonged to a tribe (Banu 'Najjar'). On the way, the pony get out of control near a place where there were five or six graves. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked his

companions if any of them could identify the dead bodies lying in the graves. One of his companions told that he could. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) enquired when they had died. He answered that they had died in the days of Ignorance. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed that the occupants of the graves were being put to torture. Fearing that they would give up burying the dead bodies, he did not think it advisable to pray to God for showing them torments in the grave that he had witnessed.

Kinds of Torments in the Grave

Hadrat Saurah b. Jundub (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) often used to ask his companions whether or not they had a dream. One day early in the morning, he told voluntarily that at night he saw two men come towards him who led him to the temple of Jerusalem. On the way we passed by a man who was lying down and another man was battering his head with a stone. When he hit the latter on the head, the stone, after crushing his head, rebounded and fell at a distance. No sooner did he go to pick up the stone again, than the crushed head came back to its former condition. Returning, he again assaulted his victim. He went on hitting him on the head. Exclaiming that God be praised (the Holy Prophet) enquired who those men were. His companion informed him that there was something more to be seen. They resumed their journey. They had gone not very far, when he saw a man ripping

open the corners of the mouth of the other man, who had fallen flat on a cushion with a hooked iron rod. At first he rent one side right from the corner of the mouth to the nape but when he started tearing the other side, the injured side healed up. He went on doing so. As soon as he started to rip open the other corner of the mouth, the first injured side came back to its former condition. Exclaiming that God be praised, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) enquired who those men were. His companion informed him that there was something more to be seen. Again, they resumed their journey. They reached a place where there was an oven. He heard screams coming from the direction of the oven. He stopped and peeped into the oven and saw a multitude of naked men and women under whom burning flames leapt. The flames burnt their skins and the pain so inflicted caused them to cry bitterly. The foul smell which emitted out of the oven was unbearable. He enquired who those men were. His companion informed that there was something more to be seen. Again, they resumed their journey. They came to a stream. It was as red as blood. A man was swimming in the stream while the other one, who was carrying many stones, was standing on the bank. As soon as the swimmer swam to the bank, the other man would put stone into his mouth as a morsel. They went on doing so. He enquired who those men were? His companion informed him that there was something more to be seen. They resumed their journey. On his way he saw that an ugly man would kindle fire and go round and round it. He enquired who the man was. His companion

informed that there was something more to be seen. They resumed their journey, and came to a verdant garden. He saw such a tall man standing in the middle of the garden that his head was not visible to him. The man was surrounded by many children whom the Holy Prophet had never seen before. He enquired who they were. He was informed that there was something more to be seen. They resumed their journey. They reached a big and spacious garden he had never seen before. With the permission of his companion, he entered the garden and saw a populated city in it. Its buildings were constructed with bricks made of gold and silver. They went to the gate of the city, got it opened and entered the city. Hardly had they entered when some men, whose bodies were partly beautiful and partly ugly approached them. His companion commanded them to plunge into the stream flowing nearby. They jumped into it but when they came out, the ugliness of their bodies had vanished and their persons turned beautiful from head to foot. His companion informed him that that was the Garden of Eden and that was his abode. He looked up and saw a silvery parlance. His companion further informed him that that was also his abode. He prayed that God might bless him and asked if he could enter his dwelling place. He did not give him permission to enter but assured that he would get his place at the appointed time. Then he requested his companion to unravel all the experiences of his journey, he disclosed that the first man, whose head was being crushed, was one who had received education in the Holy Qur'an but had forgotten it afterwards. He dreamed away his time

and neglected the performance of obligatory prayers. This hardship would be borne by him till the Last Day. Secondly, the man whose corners of the mouth were being ripped open, was one who was in the habit of telling lies all the day. That hardship would be borne by him till the Last Day. Thirdly, men and women who were being roasted in the burning fire were adulterers. Fourthly, the swimmer who was being given morsels of stone on the bank of the stream, was a usurer. Fifthly, the man who was kindling fire, was the guardian of hell. Sixthly the tall man who was standing in the middle of the garden, was Hadrat Ibrahim (blessings of Allah be upon him) and the children who had gathered round him were those whose death had occurred according to nature, *viz*. Islam. Seventhly, the men whose bodies were partly beautiful and partly ugly, were those who had done good as well as bad deeds, but when they were submerged in God's mercy, they were absolved from the sins committed by them. Then the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : Then both of his companions introduced themselves to him. They were Gabriel and Michael. (*Bukhari*, *Baihaqi*).

The learned say that the tradition mentioned above is authentic in regard to torments of *Barzakh*, because the dream of the prophets is always true and is indicative of actual happening. The words, "that hardship would be borne till the Last Day" occurring in the tradition bear testimony to the fact that these happenings essentially relate to *Barzakh*.

Referring to the above tradition, Hadrat Ali (Allah be pleased with him) is also reported to have

said that the man who kindled fire and went round and round it was the guardian of hell. The guardian of hell seizes those who try to escape from fire and throws them back in fire. The naked man and woman were adulterers and the foul smell emitted from the private parts of their bodies. The corpulent persons, whose anuses were being filled with fire to be drawn from their mouths, were sodomists. The stream containing milky water was the stream of paradise called *Kauthar*. (*Ibn Asakir*).

Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) saw a dining table on which dishes of fresh and roasted meat were displayed but no guest was present to dine. He also saw a dining table on which dishes of stale meat were placed and there were a few guests who had gathered round the table. He disclosed that they were people who preferred unlawful earning to lawful earning.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) saw some men whose bellies were swollen looking like a dome. Whenever they tried to rise to their feet, they fell down. They wept bitterly and prayed to God not to establish the Day of Resurrection. He was informed that they were his disciples living on usury. He also came in contact with men whose lips bore resemblance to those of a camel and who were given morsels of stone which discharged from their anuses. He was informed that they were the men who used to misappropriate the money of the orphans. He also saw some men who were being given the flesh of their own ribs. They were forced to eat it just as they used to

eat the flesh of their brothers. He was informed that they were fault-finders and back-biters. That hardship would be borne by them till the Last Day. (*Baihaqi, Dala'il-e-Nubawwat*).

Hadrat Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) saw on the night of his ascension to Heaven that the heads of some men were being crushed. Soon after their heads came back to the former condition but were again crushed. This was done repeatedly. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) asked Gabriel who those men were. The latter disclosed that they were those men who used to feel giddy at the time of saying prayers—they said prayers not to discharge an obligation but to cast off a burden. Either they said prayers as they pleased or totally neglected saying prayers. He also saw some men who had covered the private parts of their bodies with rags. They grazed like animals and ate thorny herbs or burning stones. He was informed that they were those men who neither gave the poor-due nor charity. Again, he saw some men and women who had kept before them roasted as well as putrid meat but instead of eating roasted meat they ate putrid meat. He was informed that they were those men who neglected their lawful wives and developed illicit relations with whores. The women were those who neglected their husbands and comforted the beds of other men.

He also saw a man groan under the heavy weight of a bundle but he was burdened with more load. He was informed that he was one who held the properties of others in trust but was guilty of breach of trust.

Then the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) saw some men whose tongues and lips were being cut off with iron scissors. The moment they were cut off, they came back to the former condition and were again clipped. He was informed that they were the preachers and orators who sowed the seed of discord. (*Ibn 'Adi Baihaqi*).

Referring to the above dream of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) Hadrat Umama (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) told him that he had seen a dream which was quite true. And narrating that dream he said : I saw a man approach me and seize my hand to lead me to an unknown place. On the way, I saw a high mountain. That man asked me to climb up the mountain. I told him that I could not ascend that high mountain. He said that he would remove all obstacles that could hinder me from ascending the mountain. The moment I stepped forward I found a foot-hold. I went on ascending and at every step I found a foot-hold. At last we climbed up the mountain. We had gone not very far when we saw several men and women who had the corners of their mouths ripped open. I enquired who those people were. I was told that they were the persons whose actions did not correspond with their words. Then we resumed our journey. On our way we saw some men and women in whose ears and eyes nails had been driven. I was told that those were the persons who used to listen to obscene talks and see forbidden things. Again, we resumed our journey. We had gone not very far when we saw some women who were hanging upside

down and snakes were biting their breasts. I was told that they were the women who discouraged their infants to suckle. Again, we resumed our journey. We reached a place where we saw many men and women who were hanging upside down and were licking mud. I was told that they were the persons who used to break their fasts before the appointed time. Again, we resumed our journey. On our way, we saw three men drinking pure wine and singing joyful songs. I was told that they were Zaid b. Haritha, Jaffar Tayyar and 'Abdullah bin Rahwai (Allah be pleased with them). (*Ibn Khuzaima, Ibn Hibban*).

Different Conditions of Men in the Grave

Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman b. Samura (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) visited him and told that he had seen a strange dream that night. He said, "I saw the angel of death approach one of my disciples to extract his soul. His kindness and gratitude to his parents resisted the angel of death and forced him to return. I saw the tortures of the grave envelop one of my followers. His ablution came in their way and saved him from being put to the torture. I saw the devils surround a person of my Ummah. His adoration for God intervened and liberated him from their deadly grip. I saw the angels of torture gather round one of my disciples. His prayers came to his aid and delivered him from their clutches. I saw one of my followers pant with thirst. He went to every tank to quench his thirst but returned disappointed. His fast helped him to satisfy his thirst. I saw a person of my

Ummah approach each circle formed by the prophets but wherever he went, he was turned out. His bath after pollution came and catching hold of his hand, seated him beside me. I saw one of my disciples who was enveloped in darkness and had fallen into despondency. His pilgrimage and 'Umra dispelled darkness and brought him out in light. I saw one of my followers who wanted to speak to the believers but was discouraged by them. His compassion intervened and exhorted the believers to converse with him and forbade them to give him a cold shoulder. So they started talking to him. I saw one of my followers obstruct the flames and sparks of fire so that they might not harm his face. His charity resisted them and protected his face and head. I saw the angels of torments seize the limbs of one of my disciples, but his zeal for preaching and his interest in missionary activities saved him from the clutches of the angels of torments and left him in the care of the guardian angels. I saw the scale weighing the deeds of my followers tilting the left side. His fear of God came and weighed down the right side of the scale. I saw that the deeds of my followers had made the balance light. Those children who had died in their infancy came to his aid and made his scale weighty. I saw one of my disciples standing on the brink of hell. His fear of God came and removed him from the border of hell. I saw one of my followers fall in fire. His tear which trickled down his face due to fear of God assisted him and drew him out of fire. I saw one of my followers stand over the "strait bridge" and tremble. His pleasant hope in God came forward and dispelling his fear helped him

across the strait bridge." I saw one of my disciples stand over the "strait bridge." He crawled sometimes on his hips and at other times on his knees. His act of sending blessings on me came forth and assisted him in rising to his feet after which he went straight and crossed the bridge. I saw one of my followers go towards the gates of paradise. As soon as he drew near, the gates were shut on him. His *kalimah-e-Shahadat* succoured him and after opening the gates, admitted him to paradise. I saw several men whose lips were being cut off. I enquired who those people were ? I was told they were back-biters. I saw several men who were hanging by their tongues. I enquired who those men were ? I was told that they were the men who brought calumnies against Muslim men and women. (*Tibrani, Nawadaral Usool, Targib*).

Imam Shafi'i (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said to some aged and venerable men that he prayed to God for revealing to him the secrets of those who were dead and buried in the grave. Thus, one night the graves were cleft and he saw that some dead bodies had been reclining on fine silk, some on brocade, some on gold tissue, some on sweet herb while some were weeping whereas others were laughing. He expressed the view that if God had so willed all the dead bodies would have been given equal ranks. A grave made a proclamation that the disparity in ranks is according to the deeds done by them. The men on fine silk were those who possessed good conduct. The men on brocade and gold tissue were those who died as martyrs in the cause of Allah. The men on the scented herb were those who observed fast. The men

on thrones were those who loved one another for the sake of Allah. Those who were weeping were the sinners and those who were laughing were the sinners who made repentance for their sins. (*Raud-ul-Rayahin*).

Hafiz Ibn Qayyim (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said: One cannot rid himself of the torments of the grave till one gets rid of its causes. The most effective device which safeguards one from the tortures of the grave is that before a man goes to bed, he should, for a moment, examine himself as to what he has earned and what he has lost on that day. Before he sleeps, he should repent for the sins he had committed. As soon as he gets up, he should direct his attention towards doing good deeds. Considering his life a boon, he should try to do away with imperfections in his character. God shows kindness to those whom He Wills and guides them to goodness (*Kitab-al-Ruh*).

Horrible afflictions of five dead bodies in the grave which moved the sinners to make repentance of sins

It has been reported in a tradition that a grief-stricken young man came to Abdul Malik. The latter enquired of him the cause of his grief. The young man told that he was aggrieved on account of the sin committed by him. Abdul Malik asked if his sins were bigger than the earth and heavens. He said: Bigger than these. Abdul Malik asked if his sins were more huge than Empyrean. He said: Even more huge than that. Abdul Malik asked if his sins were so grievous that even God's mercy cannot absolve him

from them. The young man kept quiet. Then Abdul Malik asked what sin he had committed. He told that he was a thief stealing the shrouds. The horrible condition of five dead bodies in the graves inclined him to repent for his sins. He said, "I disinterred a grave and saw that the face of the dead body was turned aside from the Holy Qibla and he was being tortured. I was terrified and turned back. A voice from the invisible speaker fell on my ears urging me to ask the dead body as to why punishment was being inflicted on him. I expressed my inability to do so. The invisible speaker told that he was being tortured as he looked upon prayer as something insignificant.

I disinterred the second grave and saw that the dead body had transformed into a pig and was fettered. I was terrified to see it. No sooner did I turn back than I heard a voice from the invisible speaker urging me to ask the dead body why punishment was being inflicted on him. I expressed my inability to do so. The invisible speaker told that he was a drunkard and failed to abstain from its use, though it is strictly prohibited by God. I disinterred the third grave and saw that the dead body was tied to the nails of fire and its tongue was pulled from the nape. I was terrified and scarcely had I turned back when I heard a voice from the invisible speaker urging me to ask the dead body why he was being tortured. I expressed my inability to do so. The invisible speaker told that he was dishonest in his dealings with other men.

I disinterred the fourth grave and saw that the dead body was being roasted in burning fire and the angels were giving it a sound beating and it was

screaming. I was terrified and turned back. The invisible speaker urged me to ask why punishment was being inflicted on him. I expressed my inability to do so. The invisible speaker told that he was a liar and used to swear upon false oaths.

I dug the fifth grave and saw that the angels were beating him with a column of fire and the dead body was crying loudly. I was terrified and hardly had I turned back when the invisible speaker urged me to ask the dead body why it was being tortured. I expressed my inability to do so. The invisible speaker told that he was frolicsome and used to play chess which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has forbidden.

To conclude, the tortures of the grave are inflicted as a result of the sins committed by heart, eye, ear, tongue, the belly, the private parts of the body, hand, foot and by all other parts of the body. Those parts of the body which do good works get a reward for the same.

Submission of a woman to punishment for a sin committed by her

> "And vie one with another for forgiveness from your Lord, and for a paradise as extensive as are the heavens and the earth, prepared for those who ward off evil. Those who spend (of that which Allah has given them) in ease and in adversity, those who control their wrath and are forgiving towards mankind; Allah loves the good." (Surah Al-'Imran).

The religious scholars write that some people were

filled with envy at this privilege of the Children of Israel that if anyone of them was guilty of a sin, he was required to atone himself for his sin by subjecting himself to such punishment: i.e. cutting off his nose or ear; whichever punishment he found inscribed on the door of his house. It was their conviction that if the sinner expiated his sin, he was redeemed from the sin perpetrated by him. They attached so much importance to the seriousness of a guilt that they thought that such punishments were light as compared to the atrocious act of the sinner and, therefore, enviable. The stories of those people which occur in various books of tradition bear positive testimony to the fact that after the commission of a sin, the sinner was overwhelmed by the feelings of awe and dread. Not only men, even women experienced the same feelings. It is said that a woman, who was guilty of adultery, came to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). She made a confession of her sin before him and in her eagerness to be purged of her sin, she voluntarily submitted to the punishment of lapidation. Consequently, she was stoned to death. She did so because she had a dread not of death but of the sin committed by her.

Importance of Recurring Charity and Significance of Forgiveness sought by one's Progeny

Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had given instructions that the deeds of a person are not rewarded after his death, but there are three works which are rewarded after his death. They are (1) Recurring Charity; (2) Knowledge by which

the people are benefited; (3) Pious progeny who prays for the dead parents.

How benevolent and generous is Almighty God in providing for the means of getting reward of good works after death when the time of performing good deeds has ended and all parts of the body cease to function and the dead person is laid to rest in the grave. In the above tradition, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon bim) has made mention of only three works which are rewarded after man's death : (1) Recurring charity—a charity the reward of which never ends. For example, if a man has erected a mosque for the people to observe their prayers, he would get its reward as long as the people would observe their prayers in it. Similarly, if a man creates a Trust or donates a public house or a building for the benefit of the Muslims or for the promotion of some religious work, he would get its reward. If he gets the well sunk for the public good he would get its reward as long as the people would drink water from it or perform their ablutions with its water. In another tradition, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) has given instructions that a man, after his death, is rewarded for : (1) imparting education to somebody and diffusion of knowledge; (2) leaving virtuous children behind him; (3) endowment made for the distribution of the copies of Holy Qur'an; (4) Constructing a mosque or a public house ; (5) excavating a canal for the public good ; (6) giving charity in such a way that he would get its reward after his death, that is to say, it must be in the nature of recurring charity such as the establishment of a trust of some property. Diffusion of knowledge

includes donations to a school, compilation of a religious book or its distribution among the readers or donations of the Holy Qur'an or religious books to a mosque or a school. According to another tradition, a man after his death, is rewarded for : (1) imparting education to somebody ; (2) digging a canal for the public good ; (3) digging a well ; (4) planting a tree ; (5) constructing a mosque; (6) leaving virtuous children behind him who seek forgiveness for him.

It is not necessary that he should have performed the abve works single-handed. Even if he had a little share in a work, he would get its reward in proportion to the share contributed by him. The second thing which has been mentioned in the above tradition is the knowledge of religion. For example donation of a book to a school. So long as the book is there and the people derive benefit from it, he will get its reward unceasingly. Suppose a man gives financial help to a student to enable him to learn the Holy Qur'an by heart or to receive religious education. In this case the former will get his reward as long as the people derive benefit from the knowledge of a *Hafiz* or the religious scholar, as the case may be, whether he is alive or dead. Take another example. A man gives financial help to a student to enable him to learn the Holy Qur'an by heart. The latter after teaching the Holy Qur'an to ten or twenty students, dies. In this case *Hafiz* will get recurring reward. The man who gave financial help to *Hafiz* would get its reward separately. He will get his reward automatically even until the doomsday as long as the students are taught the Holy Qur'an by one *Hafiz* after the other. Simi-

larly, if a man gives financial help to a student in order to enable him to receive education, he would get its reward as long as the people would derive benefit, directly or indirectly from the knowledge of the religious scholar. In this case too it is not necessary that he should have given financial help to the student independently. Even if he had a share in it, he would get its reward till the Day of Resurrection in proportion to the share held by him. Fortunate are the persons who dedicate their lives to the diffusion of religious knowledge, to the promotion of some religious work or to learn the Holy Qur'an by heart. Life in this world is nothing but a fleeting shadow which may disappear at any time without notice. It is only the provision of good works done in this world that matters and is useful. A man should not place reliance on his friends, companions and relatives because they will remember him only for a day or two after which they will get themselves absorbed in their own affairs and will forget him. He should, therefore, try to amass the wealth of good deeds during his life and deposit it in the solvent bank so that the capital remains intact and benefits accrue to him till the Day of Resurrection. The third thing which has been mentioned in the above tradition is a virtuous progeny that seeks forgiveness for him. Firstly, the act of bringing up virtuous children is itself a recurring charity. Needless to say, children will be rewarded so long as they do good deeds but if they also pray for their parents (when the children are virtuous they will certainly pray for their parents), it is the parents who will be rewarded. As has been mentioned in *Qissa-i-Roze*, there was a pious woman,

called Baheeta. She devoted much of her time to extol Almighty God. When she was on the verge of death, she raised her head and prayed to God that she might not be disgraced at the time of death because she had placed reliance only on the provision she had stored for the journey. She also prayed to God that she might be protected against the torments of the grave. When she died, her son visited her grave on every Friday, and after reciting the Holy Qur'an he bestowed its reward on her. Not only he prayed for his mother but also for those who were buried in that graveyard. Once he saw his mother in a dream and asked her about her health. Admitting that the agonies of death were intense she told him that by the grace of God she was feeling comfortable. She further told that scented herb was spread under her and she reclined on silky pillows and that she would be treated in the same way till the Day of Resurrection. He asked her if he would be of any service to her. She advised him not to give up the habit of visiting her and reciting the Holy Qur'an on her grave every Friday. She told him that when he came, the dead bodies buried in that graveyard gave her glad tidings of his arrival. She was much pleased to see him there and so were the others. The boy is reported to have said that after that he became more punctual. He saw in a dream that a large number of men and women had approached him. He enquired of them who they were. They told that they had come from the graveyard to thank him for his paying visits to them on every Friday and for seeking forgiveness for them. They were very pleased with him. They also urged him not to give

up the habit of visiting them on every Friday. After that he became more punctual. Another religious scholar says that a person saw in a dream that all the graves in a graveyard were cleft all of a sudden and the dead bodies, after coming out of their graves, began to pick up something from the ground in hot haste. A person, however, was sitting idle and did not pick up anything. He approached and greeted him and asked him what those people were gathering. The man replied that they were gathering the graces of such charities, prayers, blessings etc., as were sent to them by the living persons. He asked the man why he was not gathering the graces. The man told him that he need not do so, as his son, who sold Zalabia (a kind of pudding which sticks to the mouth) in a certain bazaar, recited the Holy Qur'an once daily and sent its blessings to him. Next morning when he got up, he went to that bazaar. H saw a young man, who was selling Zalabia, and his lips were stirring. He asked the young man what he was muttering. The latter replied that he recited the Holy Qur'an once daily and sent its blessings to his dead father. Long after this incident he once again saw in a dream that the dead bodies of that graveyard were gathering something and that man whom he had seen before was also gathering. He woke up and wondered at what he had seen Getting up next morning, he made for the same bazaar. On inquiring of him he came to know that that boy had passed away. Hadrat Saleh Mari (mercy of Allah be upon him) says that in the small hours of Friday morning he was on his way to the principal mosque to say his Dawn Prayer. It had not

yet dawned. A graveyard lay on the way. When he reached there, he sat down near a grave, and fell asleep. He saw in a dream that all the graves were cleft and the dead bodies, after coming out of their graves, began to talk to one another happily. Among them was a young man, who was clad in shabby clothes and looked gloomy. He preferred to sit at a secluded place. After a while, many angels, who had trays in their hands, descended from the sky. The trays were wrapped over with the coverings of divine light. The angels gave one tray to every person and whosoever took it, went into the grave. After the trays were distributed, the young man too was about to return empty handed. He asked the young man why he was sad and what was wrapped in the trays. The young man told that those trays contained the offerings which were sent to the dead bodies by the living persons. The young man told that there was none to send him an offering except his mother who had married again and had entangled herself in the worldly affairs. As she was pre-occupied with her husband, she had forgotten him. He asked the young man what was his mother's address. In the morning he went there and called his mother behind the purdah. He described to her the condition of her son. She acknowledged the young man to be her son, her flesh and blood, her very life. After this she gave him one thousand dirhams and asked him to give that amount as a charity for the benefit of his son, the apple of her eyes. She assured him that she would never forget him and would remember him with prayers and charities. Hadrat Saleh (may Allah be pleased with him) says

that he saw in a dream the same scene that he had seen before. Among the dead bodies was the same young man, who was clad in an elegant attire and looked happy. The young man came running towards him and addressing him as Saleh said that Almighty God might reward him for that favour. He acknowledged that he had received the offering sent to him.

Thousands of such episodes are found in various books. If a person wants that his children may be of use to him after his death, he should try to make them as good and virtuous as possible, which, in fact, is beneficial not only for his children but also for him. There is a verse in Sura Tehrim the English translation of which is "O ye who believe ! Ward off from yourselves and your families a fire."

Zaid bin Aslam (Allah be pleased with him) says that when the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) recited the above verse, his companions (Allah be pleased with them) asked him how could they save the members of their family from the infernal fire. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) told that they should compel the members of their family to do such deeds as are liked by God and check them from doing such deeds as are disliked by him. Hadrat 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said in elucidation of this verse that one should educate and instruct oneself and the members of one's family to do good deeds. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have prayed to God for having mercy on that father who treats his children in such a way, that they behave well towards him. In other words, his treatment should not be such that they are impelled to

disobedience. It is the duty of the parents to see that their children are virtuous. If they are not themselves virtuous and treat their parents badly, how can their children become virtuous ? According to another tradition, '*Aqiqa* ceremony of a child should be performed on the seventh day and he should also be named. When he attains the age of six years, he should be taught good manners and at the age of nine, he should be allotted a separate bed to sleep in (he should not share a bed with others). If he neglects to say his prayers at the age of thirteen, he should be beaten. At the age of sixteen, he should be married. After this, his father should hold his son's hand and say, "I taught you good manners, imparted education to you, got you married and now pray to God for protecting me from your mischief in the world and from torments that you make me suffer in the next world due to your mischiefs. The word 'torments' you make me suffer occur in various traditions under different captions. According to these traditions, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) gave instructions that whosoever commits evil he is not only liable for his own actions but also for the actions of those who are influenced by his bad examples. The latter will be responsible for the main guilt whereas the former will be responsible for the abetment of the guilt. Similarly, the elders are also responsible for the actions of their youngers who are influenced by their bad examples. The elders should, therefore, desist from indulging in indecent actions particularly in the presence of the younger. According to this tradition if a child neglects to say his prayers at the age of thirteen he

should be beaten. According to another tradition, when a child attains the age of seven, he should be ordered to say his prayers and at the age of ten he should be beaten if he neglects to say his prayers. These traditions being great in number and similar in content, are authentic. In short, if a child neglects to say his prayers, the father is ordered to beat him. If the father does not reprimand his child, the fault will lie with him. On the contrary if the child is brought up to establish prayer, to keep fasts and to abide by the divine commands, he will be rewarded for his good works. If the child also prays for his parents, he will be rewarded for it separately. Ibn-i-Malik (mercy of Allah be upon him) says that the epithet virtuous is attached to qualify children because the parents are not entitled to get reward of the children who are not virtuous. The reason for laying emphasis on this point is that the children may be persuaded to pray for their parents. So it is said that the father gets the reward of good deeds done by his children whether or not they pray for him. Suppose, a person plants a tree for the public good, and the people eat fruit of that tree. In this case the planter will get its reward whether or not the people who enjoy fruit of the tree pray for him. 'Allama Manadi (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that it is obligatory on the part of the children to pray for their parents, otherwise a prayer is beneficial to everybody whether it is observed by the children or a stranger. In this tradition three things have particularly been mentioned. According to another tradition, there are some more things the reward of which is of recurring nature. There are

numerous traditions which reveal that whosoever treads a right course, he will not only be rewarded for his good deeds but also for the deeds of those who are influenced by his examples. Those who adopt his course will get separate reward. Whosoever takes to an evil course, he will be liable not only for his own guilt but also for the guilts of those who are influenced by his bad examples. Those who adopt his evil course will be individually responsible for their guilts. According to another tradition, when a man dies, his deeds are not rewarded. But the good deeds of those who obey the commands of Allah, go on increasing till the Day of Resurrection.

Actions Cease with the Approach of Death

Hadrat Abu Sa'id Mo'ali (Allah be pleased with him) has reported that when a man dies, the register of his deeds is closed and the dead body has neither the power to do goods nor to return salutation.

That is to say a dead man is incapable of sending salutation which forms a part of worship and merits reward. He can only return salutation of those who say, "O dead man in the grave, peace be with you". This fact is substantiated by authentic traditions.

Muttarif bin Shakheer (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that on a Friday night, he passed through a plain (through which he used to pass on the nights of the week) where he saw a naked tribe. He saluted them but they did not return his salutation. He heard them talk to one another that it was Muttarif bin Shakheer. He enquired of them the reason for not returning his salutation when they were acquainted

with his name and his father's. They told that since they were dead, the character-sheet of their good deeds had been rolled up. Had they been given the power of returning salutation they would have retained even at the cost of the world and all that it contained. He asked why it was that all of them were naked. They replied that their shrouds had been torn and they had received no gift of clothes with which they could cover the private parts of their bodies. He enquired why they had assembled at one place. They replied that since the number of dead bodies in every grave had increased to seventy they appeared as if they had gathered at one place. He asked whether they were not shy with women especially when they could see one another in the state of nudity. They addressed him as Muttarif and told that as the pangs and agonies of death had divested them of their reason, men were unconscious of their manhood and women were unconscious of their womanhood. He enquired why it was that he had seen them only on that night. They replied that it was on the night of Friday that they came out of their graves to see whether or not their children or the members of their family remembered them, and gave alms to send its reward to them. When Muttarif was going to depart they called him by name and requested him that on next Friday while delivering a sermon to the public, he might inform the people that their coffins had been torn, their bodies had become rotten and their bones had decayed and people had forgotten them. They also requested him to exhort people to take pity on their wretched condition and devote themselves to do good deeds because

they were repentant for their sins.

From the above, it is clear that the dead receive the reward of charities and they expect that some of their relatives may sent the reward to them. It is also clear that the agonies of death have lasting effect and the body and soul of each of the dead is connected with the individual. But this body is called the body of *Barzakh* which is quite different from his physical being in the world. The dead take it ill that the living persons should be lost in the worldly affairs. Their statement that they cannot return salutation is open to objection because, according to one tradition, the dead not only return salutation but also recognise their visitors. It may be construed to mean that the dead can return salutation as mark of love but they are incapable of returning salutation which forms a part of worship and merits reward. As has been mentioned above, the dead did not return salutation of Muttarif even as a mark of love, it shows that they meant to express their intense sorrow. Some religious scholars have explained that the words of the dead "they cannot return salutation" may mean that they cannot return salutation so loudly that the visitor may hear it or they return salutation so lowly that the visitor cannot hear it.

(3) Ḥaḍrat 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the other life of a believer is worthless because of the Day of Resurrection, if he comes to possess the world and all that it contains it cannot absolve him from a single sin. On the contrary, a moment of worldly life in which he feels remorse and repents is of greater value because it will absolve him

from all sins committed by him during the course of several years.

Statement of 'Alim Kandi

'Alim Kandi has stated that he was sitting with Abu 'Abbas on the roof of a house. On seeing some people who were abandoning the city for fear of an epidemic, he said : "O epidemic take me with you." He repeated the sentence thrice. When 'Alim Kandi heard him say so, he asked him if he had not heard from the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) that nobody should wish for death, because death puts an end to action and a person loses opportunity of repenting, and thereby seeking the pleasure of God. Abu 'Abbas told that he had heard from the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) that one should hasten to leave the world before the following things happen :—

(1) Rule of the foolish.
(2) Majority of the ignoble.
(3) Traffic of judgements.
(4) When murder is taken lightly.
(5) When the people break off relations with their kindred and wish them ill.
(6) When the people increasingly develop the taste for reciting and hearing the Holy Qur'an after the mode of singing. (*Ibn-e-Abdubar-Marozi-Ahmad-Tabrani*).

The Angel of Death Visits Every House Daily

Hadrat Hasan (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the angel of death visits every house thrice a day. The angel of death disembodies the soul of such person, the members of his family mourn over his death, the angel of death standing at the threshold of the house, says that he is not to be blamed because he was commanded to do so. He swears by God that he had neither deprived the dead man of his livelihood, nor had shortened his age nor had curtailed any period of his life. He will continue visiting their houses till he extracted the soul of each of them.

Hadrat Hassan (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that if the members of the bereaved family were to see the angel of death and hear his words, they would forget the dead body and start weeping over themselves. (*Marozi, Ibn-e-Abi-ud-Dunya Abu-ul-Sheikh*).

Formerly the Angel of Death used to appeal before the People in Person and Disembodied Their Soul

(1) Abu Sha'thar Jabir bin Zaid (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that formerly the angel of death used to disembody the soul of the people without inflicting pain. The people began to condemn him. He complained of it to God Who created diseases. Then the people began to ascribe death to disease and forgot the angel of death. (*Marozi, Ibn-e-Abi-ud-Dunya, Abu-ul-Sheikh*).

In short, with the exception of a few chosen people, all others started attributing death to disease.

(2) "Aamash (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that formerly the angel of death appeared before the people in person and asked them

to fulfil their last wish so that he might extract their soul. Thereupon a complaint was lodged against him. God created diseases to keep death in the background.

(3) Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) told that when the angel of death appeared before the people in person he also came to Moses (Allah be pleased with him). The latter slapped him and blinded one of his eyes. He complained to God that His servant Moses, had made him blind of an eye and added that if God had not held him in reverence, he would have retaliated upon him. God commanded him to go to His slave and tell him that he should keep his hand on the skin of a bull and God would prolong his age by as many years as there would be hairs under his hand. The angel of death conveyed the message of God to Hadrat Moses (may peace be upon him) who asked what would happen after that. The angel of death replied that death would come to him even after the expiry of the extended period. Thereupon Moses (peace be upon him) said that if he had to die, he would prefer to die that very moment. Then he gave an apple to Hadrat Moses (peace be upon him) when he began to smell it, the angel of death extracted his soul. God Almighty restored the eye of the angel of death. Thereafter the angel of death abandoned to appear in person. (*Imam Ahmad, Bazar ; Hakim and Sahahab*).

Disobedience to Parents, Murder of Muslim and Speaking Ill of the First Two Caliphs lead to Evil End

Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Abi Aufa (Allah be pleased

with him) is reported to have said that a man came to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and informed him that a young man, who was on the verge of death, was instructed to utter the *Kalimah Tayyibah* but it escaped his lips. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) enquired whether the young man was in the habit of uttering the *Kalimah* during his lifetime. The people replied that he used to utter the *Kalimah* as a true Muslim does. The Holy Prophet (peace be be upon him) said that it was strange that a person who had been uttering the *Kalimah* through his life should fail to utter at the last moments of his life. Then the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) accompanied by his companions visited the young man and instructed him to utter the *Kalimah Tayyibah* (there is no god but Allah), but he expressed his inability to do so. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) asked why it was so. He told that it was because he was disobedient to his mother. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) asked if his mother had been alive. He replied in the affirmative. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) asked the people to send for the woman. When she came, he asked her if the young man was her son. She replied in the affirmative. Then the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) asked what she would do if fire was kindled and she was made to believe that if she did not recommend her son he would be thrown into the fire. The woman replied that she would recommend her son at that time. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) instructed her to swear by God and declare in the presence of the people that she had forgiven her son. She did so. Then the Holy Prophet

(peace be upon him) instructed the young man to utter the *Kalimah* (there is no god but Allah). He uttered it clearly. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was immensely pleased and said that glorified be God Who through him, had saved the young man from the punishment of hell. (*Baihaqi, Tabrani*).

'Abdur Rahman Maharbi (mercy of Allah be upon him) has stated that a person who was at death's door was instructed to utter the *Kalimah Tayyibah.* He replied that he could not do so because he always kept the company of those persons who used to speak ill of Haḍrat Abu Bakr, and Haḍrat 'Uthman (Allah be pleased with them) (*Ibn Asakar*).

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) sent Haḍrat Abu Qatada (Allah be pleased with him) in company with a few people, on a mission to Zam, one of the mountains of Medina. A man named 'Amar bin Ṣabṭ came across this troop of Muslims. On seeing the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) he uttered the *Kalimah.* Since they doubted his belief in the Muslim faith, they did not return salutation. In the meantime Mahlam bin Jasana stepped out and murdered him. On this occasion, a verse was revealed to reproach the Muslims : "O ye who believe! when ye go forth (to fight) in the way of Allah, be careful to discriminate, and say not unto one who offered you peace : You are not a believer!"

Mahlam approached the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) with the request that he might be forgiven. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) said that God might not forgive him. When Mahlam heard it, tears welled up in his eyes and he left the company. He died

the same week. When he was laid in the grave, he was thrown out of it. He was laid in the grave thrice but every time he was cast out of it. At last, the people left him in the same condition amid the stones. When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) heard about this incident, he said that the earth accommodated people even worse than Mahlam. The incident was calculated to attract the attention of the people so that they take warning from it.

The Angels Smell and Touch the Limbs of a Person at the Time of His Death

Daud bin Abi Hind (mercy of Allah be upon him) has stated that once he fell seriously ill. In the course of his illness, a man who had a large head and flushy shoulders and resembled the Sudanese, appeared before him. As soon as he saw the man, he said, "verily we are for Allah and to Him shall we return." He guessed that the man had come to extract his soul. But he was not a disbeliever that the black angel should disembody his soul as he had heard that the soul of a disbeliever was separated by a black angel. In the meantime he heard a sound and it seemed to him as if the roof of the house had collapsed. The roof was broken to pieces and the sky became visible. Two angels clad in white dress alighted from the sky. Both of them rebuked the black person and sent him away. The black man, however, stared at him from a distance, and both the angels kept on scolding him. Then one of the angels sat near his head and the other one near his feet. The former asked the latter to touch his feet. That angel touched his feet and told his companion that he used to go on

foot to say his prayers. Then the latter asked the former to touch his mouth. That angel touched his mouth and told that it was still fresh with the memory of God. (*Abu Abi-ud-Dunya; Kitab Man 'Aasha Ba'ad-ul-Maut*).

Hadrat Abu Qatada (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that his nephew called Majan fell seriously ill. It was perhaps due to the faults of his nephew that he did not visit him to enquire after his health. When Majan was on the verge of death, Abu Qatada's affection and love got the better of him and considering that he was the son of his dear brother and was nearing his end, and that he should enquire after his health. Qatada visited his sick nephew and sat beside his bed all the night long. He states that two black men appeared with hammers in their hands. Then two angels descended from the roof of the house. He heard one of the angels saying to the other that he should go to the patient to ascertain whether or not the patient had done any good deed. So one of the angels approached his nephew and smelt his head, belly and feet. Then he returned and informed his companion that he had smelt his head and had found it empty of the knowledge of the Holy Qur'an; he had smelt his belly but had found no sign of keeping the fast. Last of all he had smelt his feet but had found no mark of his standing for worship even for a single night. Thereafter the other angel came to Majan and smelt his head, belly, palm of his hand and feet. Then Abu Qatada heard the angel say that he wondered that although he was one of the followers of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) yet he was lacking in those qualities for which his followers were distinguished.

Then the angel opened his mouth and squeezed the tip of his tongue. Abu Qatada has stated that at that time he heard the angel utter Allah is the Greatest and say that he had found a Takbir on the tip of his tongue which he had very sincerely uttered in Antakia, a city of Rome. As soon as the angel wrung his tongue, the fragrance of musk spread in all directions and just then the soul of Majan was extracted. Abu Qatada (Allah be pleased with him) has reported that when the angel left after extracting the soul, he asked both the black men standing at the door to go away as they could not touch the dead body. In the morning, Abu Qatada (Allah he pleased with him) related the incident to the people. It moved them deeply and all of them after offering his funeral prayer, blessed his soul.

Presence of the Angels at the Time of Death

Hasan bin Saleh (mercy of Allah be upon him) states that on the night of his death, Abi bin Saleh, his brother requested him to bring him a tumbler full of water at that time. After finishing his prayer, however, he gave his brother a tumbler full of water, but the latter replied that he had already drunk it. He wondered who had given him a tumbler full of water when no third person was present in the garret. Abi bin Saleh said that Gabriel had just paid a visit to him and, after giving him a tumbler full of water had given him the glad tidings that he, his brother and his mother were among those upon whom God had showered graces that were in the company of the prophets, the truthful, the martyrs and the virtuous. (*Ibne Sandab etc.*).

Abdur Rehman bin Ghanam Ash'ari (Allah be pleased with him) is repo rted to have said that the son of Haḍrat Mu'adh bin Jaba' (Allah be pleased with him) died of the plague of Amwas.[1] On the death of his son, Haḍrat Mu'adh (Allah be pleased with him) showed remarkable endurance. But in a battle when he was hit by the spear of a disbeliever and was on the point of death he uttered, "The friend has come for help. A man who puts his needy friend off with excuses and regret never meet with success". 'Abdur Rehman (Allah be pleased with him) states that when he heard this strange sentence, he asked Haḍrat Mu'adh (Allah be pleased with him) if he was seeing something. The latter replied in the affirmative and said that God had conferred honour on him for showing remarkable powers of endurance on the death of his son. He added that his son had come to him to give the glad tidings that the Holy Prophet (peace be uopn him) along with his favourite angels, the martyrs and his virtuous companions, had drawn up in hundred lines, and would offer funeral prayer to bless his soul and then escort him to paradise. After uttering these words, he fainted. When he was unconscious, the people saw him shaking hands with somebody and heard him say "Welcome! Welcome! I am coming to you." No sooner did he say this than he died. 'Abdur Rehman (Allah be pleased with him) states that after the death of Mu'adh (Allah be pleased with him he saw in a dream

1. Amwas is the name of a place in Syria. Before the dawn of Islam, there spread a plague. On this analogy this plague is known as the Plague of Amwas.

that he (Mu'adh) was surrounded by a large number of people who were arrayed in white dress and rode the horses, standing amidst the crowd, he was raising a slogan 'it is the reward of those who endure with patience the calamity of plague and wound of spears.' He was also reciting a verse "All praises be to Allah, Who kept to His promise and made us the owner of this abode. We can live in this paradise at any place we like. What a good reward is for those who toil." 'Abdur Rehman (Allah be pleased with him) states that after this he woke up. (*Ibn 'Asakar*).

Haḍrat Sufyan (mercy of Allah be upon him) states that when Haḍrat Daud bin Abi Hind (Allah be pleased with him) was attacked by a plague, he fainted. After some time when he regained consciousness, he told that two persons had appeared before him. One of them asked the other: What did you find with him? The latter replied that he had spent much of his time in praising God, visiting the mosque and reciting the part of the Qur'an, he had committed to memory. (*Abu Na'im*).

When the Time of Repentance Ends

Referring to the commentary on ثم يتوبون من قريب (they show repentance when their death draws near) it has been said that time of repentance, as mentioned in it, ends with the appearance of the angel of death before the dying person.

Haḍrat Bakr bin 'Abdullah (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the time allowed for repentance is very long but it ends with the appear-

ance of the angels of death when the person also loses consciousness. (*Ibn Abi Dunya*).

Hadrat Mua'wiya bin Abu Sufyan (Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had told that among the children of Israil was a sinner who had committed 77 murders. When his conscience pricked him, he called on a priest. He made a confession that there was no sin which he had not perpetrated and, above all, he had murdered 77 innocent human beings and enquired of him whether any opportunity was left for his repentance being accepted and for his forgiveness. The priest replied that there was little hope of his receiving forgiveness. He was so disappointed to hear it that he murdered the priest and went away. He waited upon another priest and, confessing his previous sins to him, asked him if he could show repentance at that stage. The priest replied in the negative. In his utter disappointment, he murdered the second priest also and went away. He approached another priest and confessing his previous sins to him, asked if his repentance could be accepted at that stage. The priest replied in the negative. No sooner did he hear the reply than he murdered the third priest. After committing one hundred murders, he met yet another priest. He confessed his previous sins to the priest and asked if his repentance could be accepted at that stage. The priest replied that it would be wrong to say that God does not turn to those who appeal to Him for forgiveness, and urged him to ask for the forgiveness of his sins. He further advised him to mend his ways

and for that purpose he should go to a particular shrine and stay there with the God-fearing persons and worship God Almighty. As soon he heard it, he plucked up courage and after repenting of his sins, made for the shrine. He had hardly gone half the way when the angels in obedience to the command of God Almighty, disembodied his soul. Soon after his death the angels of mercy and those deputed for giving punishment came and started disputing as to who should remove the dead body. At that time a third angel appeared on the scene and decided that they should measure the distance between his starting place and his destination. If he was found nearer to the village of the repentant, he should be counted among the righteous ; otherwise among the sinners. When the distance was measured, he was found nearer to the village of the repentant by a span. Consequently, he was granted forgiveness and was taken away by the good angels. (*Abu Na'im*).

An Episode Described by Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him)

Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) states that a person fell seriously ill. His friends had been sitting beside him. All of a sudden, the sick man became senseless. Considering him dead they covered him with a cloth and shut his eyes. When they were going to wash him, he stirred. They looked at him in amazement and told him that they had taken him as dead. When he heard it, he informed that it was true that he had passed away. After his death he was carried to his grave. A handsome and scented man laid him in

the grave. Suddenly a black and dirty woman also appeared. She began to point out his imperfections one by one in such a way that he hung his head in shame. He wrangled with the woman about his faults. At last the woman said that their dispute would be settled at some other place. He followed her and entered a spacious house which had a silvery platform. A mosque was erected in one of its corners and a person while saying his prayer in it was reciting Sura Namal but he broke off in the middle of Sura as he had forgotten a verse. He helped the man pick up the thread. After finishing his prayer, the man asked him if he had learnt that Sura by heart. He replied in the affirmative. On hearing it, the man took out a book from his pillow and began to read it. At that moment the black woman also came there and started pointing out his bad deeds one by one. The handsome and scented man also came there who contradicting the woman, began to make mention of his good deeds. On hearing it, one of the persons in the mosque announced that although he had exposed himself to risk, yet God Almighty had forgiven him his omissions and added that his death had not yet come and that he would die on Monday. Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the sick man had told them that if he died on Monday in pursuance of the divine suggestion, he was sure that what he had seen was based on truth and his sin would be forgiven him. If his death did not occur on Monday, they should consider that what he had seen was the state of delirium. (*Ibn Abi Dunya*).

Mutual Introduction of Souls

Abu Na'im (may Allah be pleased with him) has reported that when Hadrat Hasan (may Allah be pleased with him), the grandson of Hadrat 'Ali (mercy of Allah be upon him) fell seriously ill, he began to feel restless. At that time, a man visited him and said he was uneasy in his mind about the future because his soul was being separated from his body and he was nearing his end. He should bear in mind that after his death, he would meet his father, Hadrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) and his mother, Hadrat Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her). He would also meet his grandfather, Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his grandmother Hadrat Khadija (may Allah be pleased with her). He would take comfort in the company of his uncles, Hamza and Ja'far (may Allah be pleased with them) and his maternal uncles Qasi, Tayyab Mutahar and Ibrahim (blessings of Allah be upon them). He would be pleased to see his maternal aunts, Ruqiyya, Kulthum and Zainab (Allah be pleased with them). When Hadrat Hasan (Allah be pleased with him) heard that after his death, he was to meet all those persons, he became happy. (*Abu Aasak'if*).

Hadrat Lais bin Sa'id (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that a person who hailed from Syria died a martyr. After his martyrdom, his living father would meet his son in a dream on every Friday night. He would talk to his son and forget his grief. On a Friday night it so happened that the father did not see his son. When he saw his son in a dream the next Friday night he complained to him that his

disappearance on the previous occasion had hurt his feelings. The son replied that he could not meet him on the previous Friday night because all the martyrs had been ordered to receive and meet Hadrat 'Umar bin 'Abdul Aziz (mercy of Allah be upon him) on his arrival. He had to go to receive him. It was the incident of the same night when Hadrat 'Umar bin 'Abdul Aziz (mercy of Allah be upon him) had passed away, and the martyrs had been ordered to receive and meet that pious man. (*Abu Na'im*).

How the Angels ask a Believer to Recline like a Bride and how the Earth presses a Dissembler and an Infidel

Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the Holy Prophet had instructed that when the dead body is laid in the grave, two angels, who have dark complexion and blue eyes come to examine him. One of them is called *Munkir* and the other is called *Nakir*. They ask him what he has to say about the Messenger (whom God had sent for the guidance of people). If he is a believer, the body replies, "the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the bondman of Allah and His messenger. I declare that there is no god but Allah and verily Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the servant of Allah and His messenger." On hearing it, they say that they already knew that he would give this very reply. Then his grave is widened from all sides to the extent of 70 spans and then illuminated. After this, he is asked to take rest. He says that he intends

to visit the members of his family so as to apprise them of his present condition. The angels inform (that there was no law providing for the return of him who enters this place) and ask him to recline like a bride whom nobody, except her husband can disturb (so he lives in the grave comfortably), till the Day of Resurrection when he would be resurrected from the same place.

But if the dead man is a dissembler or an infidel he says to the angels, "I have told what I heard the people say (I do not know more than what I have told)". Then the angels say that they already knew that he would give this reply. After this, the earth is ordered to compress him. The earth compresses him in such a way that his ribs of one side pierce the ribs of the other side. He suffers the torments of the grave till (the Day of Resurrection) when he would be resurrected from the same place. (*Tirmidhi*).

From the above traditions, it is evident that the believers would live in peace and contentment in *Barzakh*, and they would not lose their senses. They would only think of prayers and answer the questions of the angels without any fear. When they would come to know about their own condition they would request the angels that before taking rest, they might be allowed to meet the members of their family so that they might convey the glad tidings to them. When they would find their good ending, they would pray in ecstasy that the Day of Resurrection be established so that they could enter paradise as soon as possible. A man whom God favours does not lose his senses and, by the grace of Allah, gives correct answers. According to Sura Ibrahim

Allah confirms those who believe by firm saying (*Kalimah Tayyibah*) in the life of the world and in the Hereafter."

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) enquired of Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) what would be his condition when the people, after burying him in the grave, would leave him alone, and the examiners of the grave, having loud voice like a thunder and glittering eyes like a flash of lightning would come to him. They would make him tremble and talk to him in an authoritative manner. Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) asked the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) whether they would have their wits around them. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) replied that they would retain the same faculties as they possessed that day. Thereupon Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said that he would deal with them by exercising his intellect.

The Dead in *Barzakh* ask a Believer after their Friend's Death

Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had told that when the angels take the soul of a believer to the souls of (those) believers (already dead) those souls are more delighted to meet it than the people (in the world) at the time of meeting a lost person. They ask after their friend's health. Then they themselves say (to one another) that they had better wait for some

time. He must take rest because he had borne much suffering in the world. Then he tells about the health of living persons and informs that the men (who had died before his death) had suffered deaths and asks them whether he had not come there. On hearing this, they say (when he bids farewell to the world and had not come there) he must have been thrown in hell. (*Ahmad, Nasa'i*).

A Fighter in the Way of Allah, a Guardian of the Frontier of an Islamic State and a Martyr

Hadrat Miqdam bin Maadikarb (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had told that God Almighty gives the following six rewards to a martyr : (1) As soon as the first drop of his blood trickles down, he is forgiven and his abode in paradise is shown to him ; (2) He is kept safe from the torments of the grave ; (3) He will be free from that great anxiety which the people will feel at the time when the trumpet will be blown ; (4) A crown of honour will be put on his head. Each gem of the crown will be more valuable than the world and all that it contains. (5) He will have seventy-two celestial brides, having big eyes; (6) His recommendation in favour of seventy relatives will be accepted. (*Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah*)

Hadrat Salman Farsi (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had told that the act of guarding of the Frontier of an Islamic State in the path of Allah is better than observing (voluntary) fasts for one month and standing in prayer

all night long for one month. If the man, who guards the frontier, dies in the course of performing his duties, he will continue receiving its reward (till the Day of Resurrection). He will be provided with food (which is given to the martyrs) and he will be kept out of the mischief of mischief-makers in the grave. (*Mishkat and Muslim*).

Hadrat Abu Ayyub (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had told that a man, who faced his enemy and remained steadfast till he was slain or overcome his opponent, would be kept out of mischief in the grave.

Every Corner of the Graveyard Adorns Itself in Honour of a Believer

Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had said that when a believer dies, every corner of the graveyard adorns itself for him and expresses the desire that he might be buried beside it. But when an infidel dies, darkness prevails in the graveyard and every corner of the graveyard seeks protection of God Almighty and appeals to Him that the wretched fellow should not be buried beside it. (*Hakim Tirmidhi, Ibn 'Askari, Ibn 'Adi*).

The Grave Addresses the Dead

1. Hadrat Abu Sa'id (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had instructed that the people should remember death which brings the pleasures to an end. The grave addresses the dead daily and makes a proclamation "I am a home of poverty and solitude. I am a home of dust and worms." When a believer is buried, the grave welcomes him and conveys the glad tidings "you were my favourite among those who walked over me. Now that you have come to meet me, I will never desert you." After saying this, the grave widens as far as the eyes can see, and the portal of paradise is opened. (*Tirmidhi*).

2. Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) attended a funeral procession. He was also present there. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) told that the grave daily announces "O offspring of Adam, why have you forgotten me? Don't you know that I am a home of solitude, a home of poverty, a home of wilderness, a dwelling of worms and reptiles and I am a dungeon? But I extend my boundaries for those whom God Almighty honours with His favour." After this, the Holy Prophet said that the grave is either an orchard of paradise or an oven of fire. (*Tibrani*).

3. Hadrat Abu Hajjaj Shamali (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had told that when the dead body is laid in the grave, the grave says, "O son of Adam, you died at last. You deluded yourself with false hopes. Didn't you know that I am a home of mischief and darkness, a dwelling of worms and reptlies? What was it that

tempted you and made you bold on my surface. If the dead body is pious, a reply is given to the grave on his behalf that it should take into account his deeds. He performed good deeds and abstained from doing bad deeds. On hearing, the grave says, "No doubt he was pious. I will confer favours on him." Then the dead body is illuminated and his soul is commended to God Almighty. (*Hakim, Tirmidhi*).

4. Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Ubaid (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had told that a dead body sits down and hears the sound of footsteps of those people, who had gone to his grave with the funeral. The grave says to the dead body, "O son of Adam ! May damnation take you ! You did not think of my straitness, my horrid smell, my wilderness and the worms and insects crawling in me. This is the reason why you did not make preparations for avoiding these things." (*Ibn Abi Dunya*).

5. Hadrat Yazid bin Shajarah (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the grave says to an infidel and a transgressor, "Did you not think of my darkness, my wilderness, my solitude, my straitness and my grief?" (*Ibn Abi Shaiba*).

The Deeds will be Embodied

The good and bad deeds will take shape and will give comfort to the doer or put him to the torture in the grave as well as on the Day of Resurrection, according as his deeds are good or bad. Though the deeds are abstract, yet it is not out of God's power to

clothe abstraction with a body. We should believe in the events of life Hereafter, even if we fail to understand them.

1. Hadrat Nawas bin Saman (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had told that on the Day of Resurrection the position of the people, who recited the Holy Qur'an and acted upon it, will be such that they will have the Holy Qur'an with them and Sura Baqara and al-Imran will go ahead of them. Both these suras will plead the case of their readers. (*Muslim*).

2. Hadrat Ibn Mubarak (mercy of Allah be upon him) states that Hadrat Zaid bin Aslam (may Allah be pleased with him) had reported that on the Day of Resurrection, the deed of a believer will take the comeliest shape. It will be in the prime of youth, having a charming countenance and its form will diffuse fragrance. In that appearance, it will sit by the side of its doer. Whenever the doer will feel uneasiness and will be overtaken by fear, it will console him. On seeing this the believer will pray, "My God reward thee. You are a good companion. Please tell me who are you ?" The deed will say, "Don't you recognize me? I have been with you in the world as well as in the grave. I am your deed. As you did good deed, you are finding me good. Come and ride on my shoulders. I have been riding on you in the world for a long time. It is your turn to ride on me." As soon as the believer will ride it will carry him to God Almighty and will say, "O God, these people who went into business in the world, earned a lot of profit and those who established industries

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got their share but this man mortified his sensuous appetite and stood by me." God Almighty will say, "Ask for anything you want." He will say, "O God I ask for Your forgiveness and mercy." God Almighty will say, "I forgive you." Then he will be dressed in a costly suit of honour and reverence and a crown, whose each pearl will sparkle with a space of two days, will be put on his head. After this the dead will say, "O God this man was reduced to destitution because he paid more attention to do good deeds than to heap up money and as a result he could not spend money on the needs of his parents, whereas others went into business and earned a lot of money not only, for themselves but also for their parents. On reaching such appeal, his parents would have the same facilities that had already been extended to the pious man. On the contrary, the deed of a disobedient man will take the ugliest form, giving offensive smell and will sit by the side of its doer. When he will feel uneasiness and will be overtaken by fear, his deed will add to his anxiety and fear. On this, the disobedient man will say, "You are a bad companion Who are you ?" The deed will say, "Don't you recognize me? I am your deed. Kneel down so that I may ride on you because you have been riding on me in the worldly life."

The Condition of the Poor and the Rich in the Grave

Hadrat 'Amr bin Muslim (mercy of Allah be upon him) states that a grave-digger described an incident of his life that once he dug three graves for burying three corpses. After digging two graves he was busy digging

the third grave, when he, as a result of intense heat was obliged to put a blanket on the grave so as to take rest under its shade. While he was sitting there, he saw a wohderful scene. Two men who rode the red horses, came and stood near the first grave. One of them ordered the other to write. The latter asked what he should write. The former ordered him to write "A league in length and a league in breadth." After this, they came to the second grave and one of them ordered the other to write. The former ordered him to write "as far as the eyes can see". Then they came to the third grave in which he was sitting. One of them ordered the other to write. The latter asked what he should write. The former ordered him to write "the distance between the forefinger and the thumb." After seeing this the grave digger anxiously waited for the arrival of three funerals. At last a funeral consisting of a few men, came there. He asked who was the dead man The people told that he was a water-carrier who had a large family to support.

Since he died a destitute, they had to bear the expenses on his burial. On hearing that, he returned the wages for grave-digging and requested them to give that amount to the bereaved family. After that, the dead body was laid to rest in the grave. Instantly, there appeared a third funeral which was attended by the few men who had carried the bier. They stopped near the second grave about which both the riders had said, "as far as the eyes can see". He enquired about the dead man and the people told that the dead man was a foreigner whom they had found dead on horse back in a pitiable condition. He refused to receive

the wages for grave digging and buried the dead body. He waited for the third funeral till the first watch of the night. At last, the people brought a funeral. He enquired about the dead man, and the people told that that was the funeral of a respectable woman of a famous and rich family. It was attended by a large number of men. At last the dead body was buried in the third grave about which both the riders had said the width of this grave "is equal to the distance between the fore-finger and the thumb." (*Kitab Dibaj-Sharh-as-Ṣudur*).

Both Body and Soul are Tormented in the Grave

A magian who had three skulls of the dead men with him, came to Caliph Haḍrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) and stated that according to his master (peace be upon him) a person who has faith in a religion other than Islam and dies as such will be put in fire. Then the magian recited a verse which can be translated : "Those people are brought into contact with fire day and night." Haḍrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said that the instructions of our Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) are correct beyond any shadow of doubt. On hearing that, the magian took out the three skulls and informed that the first skull was that of his father, the second was his mother's and the third was his sister's. He further told that at the time of their death, they had Zoroastrian faith. When he touched the skulls, he found them cold (whereas, according to the saying of the Prophet) (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) the skulls should have been hot, because those had been put in fire). On hearing that, Haḍrat 'Umar

(may Allah be pleased with him) sent for Haḍrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him). When Haḍrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) came, Haḍrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) asked the magian to repeat his objection. He repeated the objection. On hearing it, Haḍrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) ordered to bring a rod of iron and a stone. When those were brought, he asked the magian to touch the rod of iron and stone and tell whether they were hot or cold. The magian touched and told that they were cold. Then Haḍrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) desired him to strike the rod of iron and the stone together. By doing so, a spark was emitted. Then Haḍrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) addressed the magian and told that just as God Almighty, by His Powers had produced fire from the cold stone and iron, in the same way He, by His Power, might have produced heat in those skulls which he could not feel. Those skulls seemed to him cold because God Almighty brought them into contact with fire in such a way that he could not feel the heat produced in the skull although they continued burning in the fire of God Almighty. That made the magian speechless.

One who does not take Precautions at the Time of Making Water suffers the Torments of the Grave

Haḍrat Abu 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) states that while going on a journey, he happened to pass through the graves of the pre-Islamic times. Suddenly, a man came out of one of the graves. He was surrounded by the flames of fire and his neck was

bound with a chain of fire. He had a small water bag of leather. That man addressed him as 'Abdullah and requested him to give him water to drink. In the meantime, another man came out of the same grave and forbade him to give water to that man as he was an infidel. Then he caught hold of the chain and dragged that man into the grave.

Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) states that thereafter, he took his way. At night-fall, he stayed with an old woman in her house. There was a grave at some distance from that house. At night he heard a voice coming from the grave. It seemed as if somebody had uttered the words "Urine and which urine, a water bag of leather and which water bag of leather". On hearing those words, he enquired from the old woman about the dead man in the grave and asked what did those words signify. She replied that the dead body buried in the grave was her husband's. He took no precautions at the time of urination. She brought to his notice time and again that, he was worse than animals because even a camel, while discharging urine, usually spread his legs lest urine should pollute his body but he took no precautions at all. As he took no notice of her warning ; he had been crying "urine and which urine" ever since his death. The reason why he was being tortured was that he took no precautions at the time of making water. Those gentlemen who make water in a standing position, should mind it that their urine falls, partly on their pantaloons and partly on their legs. Even a dog, while discharging urine, raises his legs—but these gentlemen do not exercise care in this respect. They are worse than the dogs. Ibn

'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him states that he enquired of the old woman what was the reason that her husband was uttering repeatedly "a water bag of leather and which water bag of leather". The old woman told that one day a thirsty man had approached him with the request that he might be given water to drink. He pointed to an empty water bag of leather saying that it was filled with water. When the thirsty man took the water bag of leather, he found that there was not a single drop of water in it. As a result, he died of thirst. Ever since his death, her husband had been uttering "a water bag of leather and which water bag of leather"—that is to say, the water bag of leather which was the root cause of his sufferings. Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) states that on his return from the journey, he described the whole story to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), who admonished him not to set out for a journey alone. (*Ibn Abi Dunya*).

One who commits Murder Suffers the Torments of the Grave

Sadqa bin Khalid (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that some old and venerable men of Damascus had told him that they had gone on a pilgrimage. One of the pilgrims died in the way. They borrowed a spade from the residents of that place. They dug the grave and buried the dead man. After burying the dead body, they remembered that they had forgotten the spade in the grave. They dug the grave again and found that the neck and the hands of the dead body had been bound to the spade. On seeing

bound with a chain of fire. He had a small water bag of leather. That man addressed him as 'Abdullah and requested him to give him water to drink. In the meantime, another man came out of the same grave and forbade him to give water to that man as he was an infidel. Then he caught hold of the chain and dragged that man into the grave.

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'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him states that he enquired of the old woman what was the reason that her husband was uttering repeatedly "a water bag of leather and which water bag of leather". The old woman told that one day a thirsty man had approached him with the request that he might be given water to drink. He pointed to an empty water bag of leather saying that it was filled with water. When the thirsty man took the water bag of leather, he found that there was not a single drop of water in it. As a result, he died of thirst. Ever since his death, her husband had been uttering "a water bag of leather and which water bag of leather"—that is to say, the water bag of leather which was the root cause of his sufferings. Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) states that on his return from the journey, he described the whole story to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), who admonished him not to set out for a journey alone. (*Ibn Abi Dunya*).

One who commits Murder Suffers the Torments of the Grave

Sadqa bin Khalid (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that some old and venerable men of Damascus had told him that they had gone on a pilgrimage. One of the pilgrims died in the way. They borrowed a spade from the residents of that place. They dug the grave and buried the dead man. After burying the dead body, they remembered that they had forgotten the spade in the grave. They dug the grave again and found that the neck and the hands of the dead body had been bound to the spade. On seeing

that dreadful scene, they filled the grave with earth and could not pull out the spade. They paid the cost of the spade to the owner who accepted it. On their return from journey, they met the wife of the dead man and asked her to say something about her husband. She told that once her husband had gone with a man who had money with him. Her husband had murdered him and robbed him of his money. He had the robbed money with him at the time of going on a pilgrimage.

The Episode of the Skull of a King

Ibn Jauzi (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that Jesus Christ (blessings of Allah be upon him) was going with his companions. On his way he saw the skull of a dead man. His companions requested him to pray to God that the skull be given the power of speech so that it might tell them about the past events and they should take a warning. Jesus Christ (blessings of Allah be upon him) offered two rak'as of prayer and prayed to God. God bestowed tongue to the skull. It addressed Jesus (blessings of Allah be upon him) and asked him what he wanted to know and added that God Almighty had commanded it to answer his questions. He asked what was his position in the world. The skull said, "I was a king in the world, I remained alive for one thousand years, begot one thousand children, conquered one thousand cities, defeated one thousand troops and murdered one thousand kings. At last the conqueror of the world, died. I have come to the conclusion that it is devotion and piety that pays and greed and avarice culminates in death. What is most honourable, is submission to

the Will of God Almighty.

Hadrat Sa'id b. Mussayib (mercy of Allah be upon him) states that he and his companions led by Hadrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) went to the graveyard of Medina. Hadrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) sent salutations to the dead and asked whether they would like to tell their own story or like to hear from him. Hadrat Sa'id (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that they heard the words "peace be with you" and somebody asked the Caliph to apprise the dead of such happenings as had occurred after their death. Hadrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) told that their wives had married. Their properties had been divided. Their children had become orphans. Their enemies had occupied the buildings erected by them. After hearing that, a dead body told that their coffins had been torn to pieces. Their hair had fallen and scatter-

Their skins had been reduced to a powder. Their eyes had come out of their sockets and their nostrils were discharging pus. They had been rewarded for the same deeds that they had performed in the world. They had to suffer loss for the deeds which they had omitted to do. They had received reward or suffered loss according as their deeds were good or bad. (*History Neshapuri*).

Dispute of the Soul and the Body

Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that the soul will dispute with the body and will say that the responsibility of all acts lies on the body. The body will say that it

obeyed the orders of the soul and acted in the same way as the things were represented to it. God Almighty will say to an angel to settle their dispute. The angel will say that their case was analogous to that of a crippled and a blind man. The crippled man informed the blind man that he had seen a fruit but it was beyond his reach. Then the blind man asked him to ride on him. The crippled man rode on the shoulders of the blind man and plucked that fruit. After quoting this example the angel will ask the soul and the body to tell which of the two was a transgressor. The soul and body will say that both the men were equally responsible. On hearing it, the angel will say they were inter-dependent ; whereas the body is a vehicle, the soul is a rider.

Hadrat Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) referring to a tradition, states that on the Day of Resurrection the soul and the body will start disputing. The body will say, "I was lying like the trunk of a palm-tree. If the soul had not existed, I could not have done anything by stirring my hand or foot." The soul will say, "I was as light as air. If body had not existed, I would have lost the power of doing something." After this, the case of the soul and the body will be compared to that of the crippled and the blind man, as mentioned above. Then they will be held equally responsible. (*Daraqutni Zawaid Zahid*).

The Episode of an Innocent Saiyyida

Rabi' bin Suleman (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that he was going on a pilgrimage alongwith his brother and a group of pilgrims.

When they reached Kufa, he went out to buy the provisions for the journey. While he was making a round of the bazars, he saw a dead mule lying at a secluded place and a woman, clad in tatters, was chopping it up with a knife and keeping the small bits of carrion in a basket. He mistook her for an innkeeper and thinking that she was carrying dead flesh for the purpose of cooking, he decided to keep an eye on her movements lest she should serve dead flesh to her customers. He pursued taking precautions that he might not be detected by her. At last, she stopped in front of a building which had an exalted gate. She knocked at the gate and somebody inside the house shouted who was there. She said that it was no other than the wretched woman. When the gate was opened, there appeared four girls who wore misfortune on their faces. The woman entered the building and gave the basket of dead flesh to the girls. He peeped through a hole of the door and saw that the building was empty and desolate. The woman wept and asked the girls to cook dead flesh and thank God Almighty. She uttered that God Almighty has control over His men and it is He Who dominates the hearts of people. Those girls chopped dead flesh and began to roast it. He was disgusted to see and shouted from outside that for God's sake they should not eat dead flesh. The old woman asked him who was he. He replied that he was a stranger. She asked him what brought him there. She told him that they had fallen on evil days and had been living a miserable life for the last three years as they had no friend or helper to look after them. She asked him why he had come

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there to meddle with their affairs. He informed that no religion, except a sect of Zoroastrians, permitted to eat dead flesh. She told him that they were the descendants of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The father of those girls was a very noble man. He was desirous of marrying his daughters to men of good family but death did not allow him time to fulfil his wishes. They had sold all goods and cattles that he bequeathed to them and had become destitute. They were aware of the fact that their religion did not permit them to eat dead flesh but one could eat it in exceptional circumstances. She further told that they had been starving for the last four days. Rabi' (mercy of Allah be upon him) states that as soon as he came to know about their wretched condition, tears welled from his eyes and he left them with a heavy heart. He told his brother that he had changed his mind to go on a pilgrimage. His brother, throwing light on the virtues of pilgrimage, urged him to reconsider his decision and stated that when a pilgrim returned after performing pilgrimage, he was purged of his previous sins. He told his brother that his advice had little effect on him. After saying that, he took his clothes, pilgrim dress (*Ihram*), his provisions for his journey. He also took six hundred dirhams in cash, out of which he spent one hundred dirhams on the purchase of flour, one hundred dirhams on the purchase of clothes and concealing the remaining amount in flour, he left for the old woman's house. He handed over all these things to that old woman. She thanked God and prayed that God Almighty might forgive him his previous and future sins, grant

him the reward of a pilgrimage and give him an abode in paradise. She also prayed to God Almighty for revealing to him what he was to get in return. The eldest girl prayed that God Almighty might double his reward and forgive him his previous sins. The second girl prayed that God Almighty might grant him much more than he had given. The third girl prayed that God Almighty might treat him in the same way as He had treated her grandfather. The fourth girl, who was the youngest, prayed that God Almighty might confer favours upon him who had helped them and forgiven him his previous and future sins. Rabi' (mercy of Allah be upon him) states that the caravan of the pilgrims departed. He had to stay in Kufa till the return of the pilgrims. When the pilgrims returned after pilgrimage he thought that he should receive them and request them to pray for him as it was just possible that the prayers of anyone of them might be granted. When he saw the caravan of pilgrims, he was overwhelmed with grief on account of his failure to pilgrimage and as a result tears began to trickle down his eyes. When he met the pilgrims he prayed to God Almighty for accepting their pilgrimage and giving them a good reward of the expenses incurred by them. One of them asked what did his prayer mean. He told that it was a prayer of a man who had failed to perform pilgrimage. They were surprised to hear that and asked why he was concealing the facts that he was not present with them in the plain of 'Arafat and at the time of flinging the pebbles at the devil and circumambulating. He thought that it was nothing but a miracle of God. Instantly, the caravan of his own city

reached there. He prayed that God Almighty might reward them for their labour and might accept their pilgrimage. They also asked whether he was not present with them in the plain of 'Arafat and at the time of flinging pebbles at the devil. Why he was denying the facts. One of the pilgrims enquired of him the reason for denying the truth. Was he not present with them in Mecca or Medina. After visiting "the sacred grave" when they were coming out of "the Gate of Gabriel" he had deposited a small bag with him due to great rush. The words inscribed on the seat of the small bag were "One who deals with us, earns profit". He took out the small bag and handed it over to him. Rabi' (mercy of Allah be upon him) is reported to have said that he had never seen that small bag before. After offering his prayer for the first watch of the night, and telling his beads, he tried to unravel the mystery but was overtaken by sleep. He saw the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in a dream. He sent salutations to him and raised his hands. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) returned his salutations and asked smilingly how many witnesses be produced to testify that he had performed pilgrimage. But he was still reluctant to believe it. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) informed that the fact was that when he had changed his mind to go on a pilgrimage and had given all his provisions for the journey to a woman, who was one of his descendants, he had prayed to God Almighty for giving him a good return. God Almighty commanded an angel to assume his appearance and to perform pilgrimage on his behalf. The angel would

would continue performing pilgrimage every year on his behalf till the Day of Resurrection. As regards the worldly gain, God Almighty had granted him six hundred dinars in return for six hundred dirhams. He should enjoy himself. Then the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) repeated the same words "One who deals with us, earns profit." Rabi' (mercy of Allah be upon him) states that when he got up, he opened the small bag and found that it contained six hundred dinars. (*Rashfatul Sawi*).

The Episode of the King of the Generous

Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) is reported to have said that once Hadrat Hasan (may Allah be pleased with him) and Hadrat Husain (may Allah be pleased with him) fell seriously ill. Hadrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) and Hadrat Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her) made a vow to the effect that if their sons recovered, they would keep three fasts. By the grace of God, their sons recovered and in fulfilment of their vow, they started keeping fasts. Since there was nothing in their house to eat, they had to keep the first fast without food. In the morning, Hadrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) approached a Jew, called Sham'un with the request that if he should give some spinning wool in consideration of some wages, the daughter of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would spin it. It was settled that the Jew would give a bundle of spinning wool in consideration of three sa' of barley. Hadrat Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her) span one-third of wool and received

one sa‘ of barley. She ground them and prepared five breads—one bread for husband and wife each, one for two boys each and one for the maid-servant called Fazzab. Hadrat ‘Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) worked hard all the day long and after saying his sunset prayer with the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) he returned home. The dinner was arranged and he had hardly broken a loaf of bread, when a beggar knocked at their door. The beggar addressing them as the member of the family of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) begged for food saying that he was poor and needy. He prayed that Almighty might provide them with the food of Paradise. Hadrat ‘Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) stopped eating. He consulted Hadrat Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her) who readily agreed to give breads to the beggar. As all breads were given to the beggar, they could not satisfy their hunger. They had to keep the second fast without food. In the morning Hadrat Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her) span one-third of wool and obtained one sa‘ of barley. She ground them and cooked breads. When Hadrat ‘Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) returned home after saying his sunset prayer with the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), they sat together to take meal. Instantly, an orphan knocked at their door saying that he was lonely and destitute. They gave all breads to him. On the third day, they drank water and kept a fast. In the morning Hadrat Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her) span the rest of wool and obtained one sa‘ of

barley. After grinding them, she cooked breads. They offered their sunset prayer and sat together to take meal. Instantly, a prisoner knocked at their door saying that he had fallen on evil days and was needy. They gave all breads to him and did not eat anything. On the fourth day, they were under no obligation to observe a fast but they had nothing to eat. Hadrat ‘Ali (may Allah be pleased with him), accompanied by his sons, visited the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Hunger and weakness had made it difficult for him to walk. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) told Hadrat ‘Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) that he was deeply moved to see him and desired to see Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her). When the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) visited Hadrat Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her) she was saying her prayer. Due to hunger, her eyes did not roll in their sockets and her belly had squeezed. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) embraced her and prayed for her. On that occasion, the verses of Sura Dahr "And they feed the food to the needy, the orphan and the prisoner, for love of Him" was revealed through Hadrat Gabriel (blessings of Allah be upon him) who congratulated them on that glad tidings. Allama Sayuti (mercy of Allah be upon him) has written a brief note in *Dur Manthur* with reference to Ibn Marduwiya who reported on the authority of Hadrat Ibn ‘Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) that these verses were revealed in honour of Hadrat ‘Ali

(may Allah be pleased with him) and Hadrat Fatima (may Allah be pleased with her).

God's Dealings with the Pious, the Tale of a Pious Lady

A saint states : "Once I was making a circuit of the Holy Ka'ba when I happened to see a girl who was carrying a very small child on her shoulder. She was exclaiming : " O Munificent Lord ! Munificent Lord! the past! (*i.e.* how gracious was the Lord to her in the blessed past!). I asked her "What was it that passed between thee and the Almighty God." She said : "Once I was travelling on a boat in the company of a group of merchants. A windstorm blew with such intensity that the boat sank and everybody was annihilated. I and this child were stranded on a board ; while a negro lay stranded on another board. No one except the three of us had survived. At the first light of dawn and rowing the water with his hands he approached my plank. When his board adjoined mine he came over to my board and tried to seduce me. I remonstrated with him, "Fear the Lord! Dost thou not know in what peril we are! It seems impossible to escape this calamity even with fervent prayers to the Lord ; on the contrary you wish that we should commit sin under such circumstances." He said : "Never mind! I swear by God I shall commit this act with you." Now this child was sleeping in my lap. I quietly pinched the child, as a result of which the child instantly began to cry. I said to the negro, "Alright, wait till I put the child to sleep. Then whatever the fate ordains for me will come to

pass." The negro grabbed the child and flung him into the sea. I entreated the Mighty Lord, "O Thou Who art Mighty and intervenes even between a man, and his heart's desires, please save me from this negro with all Thy Divine Might and Authority. Lord, Thou art without doubt Omnipotent." By my Lord! I had hardly finished saying this prayer when a mammoth animal with open jaws raised its head from the sea and having devoured the negro went under water again. The Magnificent Lord saved me from the negro by His Divine Power and Authority ; He indeed, is Omnipotent ; He is Pure ; He is Magnificent. Afterwards the sea-waves lashed at me till the board was washed to the shore of an island, I landed there and thought to myself that I would eat grass and drink water till the Magnificent Lord afforded me some succour, because it is through Him alone that better conditions may prevail. I lived on this island for four days. On the fifth day I espied a boat going on the sea. I mounted a hillock and made signs in the direction of this boat. I waved my covering cloth briskly. Three men from the boat came to me on a small barge. I boarded the barge and went to the boat with them. And lo ! one of the men on the boat was holding this child of mine whom the negro had flung into the sea. Upon seeing the child I fell over him and kissed and hugged him. I told them, "This is my child, my darling." The boatmen said, "You are out of your mind, you are mad." I said : "I am not mad nor have I lost my senses. My tale is a strange one." Then I narrated to them all that

had happened to me. After hearing my story all of them hung their heads in amazement and said, "You have told us a stunning tale and now it is our turn to tell you a similar story which will astonish you. We were travelling merrily on this boat. The air was favourable. Presently an animal swam to the surface; it was carrying this child on its back. The moment this animal appeared on the surface we heard a supernatural voice "If you did not pick up this child from the back of the animal and keep him with you, your boat would be sunk." One of us rose and picked up the child from the back of the animal. The animal then went under the water. Your tale and ours, both are very strange, and all of us take a vow that henceforth the Magnificent Lord shall not find us sinning. Later they all offered penitence. How Munificent is the Pure Lord ! How Considerate ! The Most Benificent ! And the Pure One Who comes to the aid of the afflicted at the time of distress (Rawd).

The Tale of a God-Fearing Young Man

A tradition relates that in the time of Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) a pious young man used to engage himself in Divine worship in the mosque. Hadrat 'Umar used to marvel at this worship. His father had become very old. This youth used to set out to render service to his father after *'Isha* prayers. On the way a woman took a fancy for him. She used to entice him daily and try to excite him. One day the young man accompanied her. The woman entered her home. When the young man came to the door of her house and made up his mind to get

into the house, the following verse flashed across his mind :

> "Those who guard against evil, when an evil suggestion from satan assails them, they remember Allah and behold ! they begin to see aright."

At that moment the fear of the Lord so overwhelmed his heart that he collapsed on the ground and fainted. After a long while, his father set out from his house to search for him. He found the youth lying senseless. The father had the youth carried home. When the youth had gained consciousness, the father enquired : "Tell me truly what happened to you." The young man recited the above verse, shrieked, fell on the ground and his soul left the body. The people washed and wrapped his body in a shroud. Next morning somebody related this incident to Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him). He went to the young man's father to condole with him and said : "Why didn't you inform me about his funeral." The old man replied : "O Commander of the Faithful ! it was the hour of night and we did not want to cause inconvenience to you." Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said : "Take me to his grave." On arrival at the grave alongwith his companions, Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) observed : "The man who fears the day when he will stand before God will be awarded two paradises." The young man answered twice from his grave, "O 'Umar, my Lord hath indeed awarded me two heavens."

The Angel Casts Earth on People

Hadrat Anas is reported to have said : God appoints an angel over the people who accompany a funeral. When these people return after burying the dead ; this angel picks up a handful of earth from the grave and casts it in their direction saying : "Return to your world. May God make you forget the memory of this dead man." Afterwards these people forget the dead man and engross themselves in worldly business and it appears as if the dead person was never one of them, nor had they ever any connection with the dead person.

This tradition has been related in *Musnad-ul-Firdous*. A tradition transmitted by Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the Apostle of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "God Almighty has appointed an angel over the graveyard. When people return after burying a dead body, the angel picks up a handful of earth from the grave and casts it in the direction of the people and says, "Return thou to your world and forget about the dead person."

A Tale of Three Brothers

Ibn 'Asakir reports a tradition that Sadiqa b. Yazeed saw three graves on an elevated plain in Tripoli. The legend inscribed on the first grave read : "The person who believes that death is inevitable and it will deprive us of our country and it will put us to sleep in the grave, can never find comfort in life." The inscription on the second grave read : "The man

who believes that he will have to render accounts for every bit of action performed in the world and that he will get a befitting award for his deeds in the next world, cannot find peace in this world." The legend engraved on the third grave said : "The person who believes that our youth will perish in the grave and that the grave will cause our limbs to disintegrate, cannot find solace in this life." When I saw these graves, I was much amazed. I went to a nearby habitation and enquired from a saint about these graves. He said : "There were three brothers. One of them was in the service of the king and commanded his armies. The second one was a wealthy merchant. The third was a saint and passed his days and nights in worship. When the time of saint's death approached, his two brothers came to him and said : "If you wish to make a will, do it now." He answered : I possess no wealth nor am I under debt to somebody. I have no goods either. But I want you to give me a pledge that after my death you will bury me on that hillock and write this inscription on my grave: "The man who believes that he will have to render accounts for every bit of action done in the world and that he will get a befitting award for his deeds, cannot find comfort in life." Thereafter you must visit my grave for three days continuously, and this will serve you as a warning. After the death of the saint the remaining two brothers visited his grave for three days continuously. On the third day when the commander of the king's army was about to return after the visit, he heard the sound of a crashing wall from inside the grave. The commander

began to tremble with fear and returned home in great consternation. At night he saw his brother in dream and enquired : "Brother, what was that sound?" He replied : "The angel reminded me that on a certain day an oppressed person had approached me for help but I did nothing. Having said this the angel struck me with a mace. That sound came out of the angel's beating me up with the mace." In the morning he assembled his brother, the merchant, and all friends and told them, "I shall no longer live among you, and I no longer crave for the service and companionship of the king." That very moment he renounced the comforts and luxuries of life and engrossed himself in the worship of the Divine Lord, and set out on the road to the hills. When the time of his death approached, his brother, the merchant, called on him and said, "Brother, if you wish to make a will, do it now." He replied : "I possess no wealth, nor am I under debt to anybody. But give me a pledge that after my death you will bury me near the grave of my brother and put this inscription on my grave: "The man who believes that death is inevitable and that it will deprive us of our country and it will put us to sleep in the grave, can never enjoy peace in life." Then visit my grave for three days continuously." After the death of his brother, the merchant continued to visit his grave for three days. On the third day as he was about to return after his visit, he heard a breath-taking sound from inside the grave and came home in great fright At night he saw his brother in a dream and enquired : "How are you?" He replied : "All is well with me. Penitence has washed away all

my sins and I stand acquitted." Then I asked : "How is my brother?" He replied : "He holds high estate among the pious people." Furthermore, I enquired, "What will happen to me in Eternity." He replied : "Everyone shall be requited according to his deeds. It is incumbent on you to take advantage of leisure and make provisions for your eternal journey with good pious actions." In the morning he also renounced the world. He gave away all his possessions to the poor and the destitute and devoted the rest of his life to the worship of the Lord. When the time of his death approached, his son came and said "Father, make a will." The father replied : "Having no possessions I have nothing to bequeath. But I want you to give me a pledge that after my death you will bury me near the graves of your two uncles and inscribe this legend on my grave : 'The man who believes that our youth will perish in the grave and that our faces and all limbs will disintegrate therein, can never enjoy comfort in life" and you should visit my grave for three days continuously." The young man visited the grave for three days. On the third day having heard a terrible sound from inside the grave he returned home grieved. At night he saw his father in a dream. The father said : "You shall join us soon. Make ready your provisions and be prepared for thy future home. Do not shun care like other world-loving creatures lest you grieve and feel ashamed at the time of death. Hurry up ; be fast ; faster and faster."

The narrator tells us that "On the morning following that night in which the boy had had this dream, I called on him. He related to me the story of his dream

and said : "I have to live for three months or three days more, for father stressed upon it thrice." On the third day the young man assembled the whole family and took leave from everyone. He turned his face towards the *Qiblah* and having recited the Holy *Kalima* affirming his belief in Allah and His Apostle passed away.

THE ACCOUNTS OF THE DAY OF RESURRECTION

Introduction

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.
All Praise be for Allah,
The Lord of all the worlds,
All blessing and peace be on His Messenger, our guide Muhammad,
And His Progeny and upon all the companions of his."

Coming to the point : Whosoever came into this world, he left it and marched away on the path of the next world. It means that he reached *Barzakh* after having completed all the breaths of his life and having traversed the distance of the painful valley of death. There are both torments and pains as well as comforts and delights in the *Barzakh*. One has to pass through divergent situations in the *Barzakh* according to one's own deeds. Whosoever passes away from this world finds his place in the *Barzakh*. In a word, anyone who comes into being will taste death.

"All splendour will be left here, when the wanderer shall set out on his journey to Eternity.

Just as the ages of the human beings and those of the jinns are pre-determined, in the same way the age of this world has also been fixed. When the age of this world will come to its end, all of a sudden, the whole of it will suffer extinction. The expiry of men is called 'death' and the destruction of the world as a whole is called 'Resurrection.' The Almighty and Magnificent God, while expounding the philosophy of 'death' hath commanded :

> "He it is Who has created death and life so as to put ye to the test as to who amongst ye does good works."

In other words, life and death have been created by the Lord of all the worlds only with the object of testing your deeds and to witness who amongst you does evil works and who does good deeds, and that, who is amongst you, who does only the good works. He (God) gave the man a trial by providing him an opportunity of 'action' and the method of action in the worldly life and created the next world (Hereafter), the news about which was vouchsafed to men through the Prophets. (God's Messengers) in the following words :

> "O men ! Ye have to die and, after death, have to rise up again and, then ye have to be answerable to your Creator and Master."

After *Barzakh*, the gathering together of all the human-beings by Almighty Allah before Him by reviving them only with the object of calling them to account is called "Resurrection". The life there is quite different from both the earlier lives. (Worldly

life and *Barzakh* life). There is no work of any kind to do. No reward can now reach any one. The character rolls of all the human beings have been closed finally. The mosque, which was built up, has now been annihilated, its school has been razed to the ground ; its books have been destroyed. All the relatives, offsprings, disciples and friends, after perishing have been re-assembled. In future, every kind of virtue has been stopped and all the hopes of a man have been finished. His self-done virtues or those which were done for him by others—all these have, after their entry, been submitted in the office (of the Lord), and today all the givers and takers (the plaintiffs and the defendants) are present before the Sovereign Lord. Therefore, it is not the Sovereign Will of God at all to reward or punish the men in this mortal world because the man is still busy in his action. He is still alive. It is possible that he might have committed some sins in his youth due to the excitement of his youth and foolishness and, during th last days of his life, might feel ashamed of himself about it and repent for it and thereupon God's mercy may flow-over and embrace him with His Forgiveness.

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In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

1. A Brief Account of the Resurrection Day

Hadrat Israfil (peace be upon him) will sound the trumpet (a horn of a particular kind) for the first time, either forty years or forty months or forty weeks before the commencement of the Day of Resurrection. Its sound will be so dreadful and frightening that all things

having life, all human beings, animals, birds, all those living on the surface of the earth and all those living underneath the earth will start trembling with this dreadful fright and terror. The human body will start quivering and trembling, the faces will grow pale, the hearts will beat swiftly (painfully), the eyes will sink into their sockets and in this condition all living beings will meet their end. On the day when first trumpet resoundeth, and the second followeth it, on that day hearts beat painfully, while eyes are downcast.

Translation : The Day when the earth quivers a clarion shall follow it. The hearts will beat so fast and the eyes will be full of terror.

There will be such a violent earthquake that all the buildings, all the mountains and all the trees on the earth will move from their foundations. The heights and depths as well as the ups and downs of the earth will come to an even level. "And when the earth is spread out." (Sura : The Sundering : Part : 30) The heaven will, after splitting asunder, become like a lifeless body. The sun and the stars on their overthrow and fall, will become faded and their light will be no more. The rivers will be set on fire. The human beings will be flying in the air like kites. In short, there will be such a great revolution (change and alteration) in the heavens and on the earth about which the human beings had never thought even in the slightest degree prior to this day. And the whole present system will be confounded. There will be neither any mountain, nor any tree and neither any inhabitant. Thereafter a particular kind of rain shall

pour down from the heavens the waters of which will have such an effect that every thing to which these waters reach will become verdant and living.

Then Israfil (God may bless him) will be commanded by God to sound the trumpet again. This time the effect of the sound of the trumpet will be such that all the souls will return to their own bodies and now a new kind of world will be created. "In Thy hand is the good. Lo ! Thou art Able to do all things." Israfil (God's blessings be on him) is the same, the trumpet is the same and also the sound is the same but, in the first instance, there is destruction and annihilation and, for the second time, there is life and population. "Allah doeth what He willeth. And decideth what He willeth." Now, those people who had obeyed God and struggled against their personal ardent desires in the mortal world, would rise on this occasion with honour, with ease and comfort ; without apprehending any danger and fear but rejoicing : "Lo ! Verily the friends of Allah are those on whom fear cometh not, nor do they grieve." "In that day many faces will be calm, glad for their righteous deeds and those who acted upon their ambitions, will be fearful and upon their faces there will be signs of pallor and terror. Their eyes wi l be lustreless, faded and terror-stricken." They will rise up crying : "Woe upon us ! Who hath raised us from our place to sleep?" When all the human beings will have been revived, they will be arranged into separate groups and columns. While the Jews will be caused to stand in one line, the Christians will stand in another line. Similarly, those who ascribed partners to Allah will be arranged to stand in another

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separate line. There will also be a separate line of the Muslims (the believers). And then from amongst the nation of every prophet of Allah, the pious men will be gathered at one place and the sinners at another place ; those who said prayers and kept fasts will be brought together at one place and the evil doers at another place. The drinkers of wine will be caused to gather separately. The thieves and robbers will be grouped together at different places. In other words, every kind of people will be arranged to stand in separate and different lines, and in such systematic arrangement, shall Allah's police (the angels) produce all of them in the Court of the Almighty.

"A day when trumpet is blown, and ye come in multitudes." (Sura : The Tidings).

After this, the heaven will be opened so that the angels may come down from there bearing the character rolls (records) of human beings, and make their appearance. "And the heaven is opened and becometh as gates." (Sura : The Tidings). And these breaches in the sky will become the passage-ways to Paradise. The cause for the bursting of the heaven, as written by the learned men, is this that Almighty God will cast a particular light on the heaven as a result of which the heaven will move downward and the sky will burst under the impact of this shock. Now the angels will hand over these character rolls (record of the past life) to the people concerned who had done these deeds in the mortal world. The manner in which these character rolls will be handed over to them will be like this : These will be handed

over to the obedient of Allah from the right side and the disobedient from the left side. The former are called 'those on the left hand.' "And those on the right hand; what of those on the right hand. And those on the left hand ; what of those on the left hand?" (Sura : The Event)

At another place, its explanation is given in the following words :

"Then, as for him who is given his record in his right hand will say, being in a state of happiness, to the angels ; Take my character book ! This is full of virtues. Surely I knew that I should have to meet my reckoning in the Hereafter, and, as such, I was not obedient to my ardent desire but instead was thoughtful of God's obedience. Then such a person will be granted the desirable pleasure and comfort. And the matter will be finished here but he will enter into a high Garden consisting of fine houses, excellent floors, vessels made of silver ; and there will be canals flowing ; springs gushing ; trees laden with verdant and green fruits to such an extent that they will be bending with their weight. These trees will be in such a state that the fruit towards which the heavenly person will make a sign, its tree will bring near him one of its branches laden with fruits. And they will be given a tiding : Eat and drink at ease in recompense for that, in the past days of the mortal world you acted against your sensuous desires and abstained from evil thoughts in obedience to your Real Lord. (Sura : The Reality)

Question: Why the character rolls (record) of pious men will be given in their right hand ?

Answer: The reason of giving the record of pious

men in their right hand is this that the right hand is triumphant over the left one. There is a significance in giving the record in this hand to the effect that virtues are predominant and weighty over his vices. Then as for him whose scales are heavy with good works, he will live a pleasant life." (Sura : The Calamity : Part : 30).

Question: How the fruits of the paradise will automatically fall into the mouth of the person as soon as he desires? Will these trees have life? Even if they are animate, then too how will they have knowledge to this effect without any sign made by the heavenly person and without his call to them to do so?

Answer: Almighty God will charge the heart of the heavenly person with power, like electricity, and will, for his confidence, join its connection with every heavenly thing and his determination will possess that peculiarity which is in an electric switch. When light is desired, its switch will turn on and there will be light. When air is wanted, the switch of the electric fan will turn on and the fan will start revolving the air and so on. Nevertheless, the people whose record will be given in their left hand, they will say with sorrow : "Oh, would that we had not been given our book (character roll) and knew not our reckoning! This is so because these people will remember their evil deeds and thereby their soul will receive a severe shock." Then they will cry with extreme sorrow : "Oh, would that it had been death to decide my case and I would not have revived to be in this painful doom ! Oh, my wealth hath not availed me ! Oh, what should I do? My power and strength hath been ruined (hath gone

from me)." (Sura : The Reality)

Question : What is the arrangement in case the sinners, on seeing their record books, refuse to confess them?

Answer No. 1 : Firstly, these people will themselves be, on seeing their record books, ashamed of and terrified because there will be, along with the character rolls, a picture of every crime (sin) committed by them in the world. Take for instance, a man who fornicates and commits theft in the world, and at the time of his committing these crimes, a photo of his deeds is taken. So when this accused is produced before a Magistrate, the police, while submitting his report, also presents a photo of the occasions of his crime. Will this accused, in such a case, refuse to confess his crime?

Answer No. 2 : Secondly, whatsoever crime (sin) or virtue will be committed and done, this earth will relate to Allah everything about it. "That day earth will relate (as a crown witness) all her chronicles." (Sura : The Earthquake : Part : 30).

Take for example a case like this: There is gramophone in which recitation of the Holy Qur'an by a Qari (reciter) has been recorded and, during the course of his recording the reciter made mistakes in recitation. When this record is completed, it is put on the machine and played in the presence of that Qari (reciter) so that he himself may listen to it. Now that record sounds the recitation of the Qur'an incorrectly because this poor recording machine would recite the same Qur'an which had been recorded in it because it is helpless in this case. Will this Qari (reciter) now refuse to admit his mistakes? The answer will be : Not at all.

And even if there is such a shame-proof Qari who does not admit his mistakes, will the listeners, after this incident, consider this Qari as one speaking the truth? Despite such an arrangement, there will still be some impudent persons who will refuse plainly that these acts are not theirs. For the sake of reason, the Almighty Allah will then make them tongue tied : "This day We seal up mouths, and hands speak out and feet bear witness as to what they used to earn." (Sura : Ya Sin: Part: 23). And their hands and feet will automatically begin to give evidence against them and it would appear as if Almighty God would bring forward our hands and feet to give evidence against ourselves by giving them the speaking power. And the Resurrection Day will be of the duration of fifty thousand years. "Its duration is fifty-thousand years. But the Almighty God would get Himself free from the reckoning of His creation within seven to eight hours. And then the people on the right hand, those who ward off evils and the obedient ones would be addressed : O Souls ! Living in ease and comfort, you should walk under the shade of your God's blessing in such a manner that you should be pleased with your Lord so that the Lord is pleased with ye, and enter into My Paradise in the company of My favourite personages. But ah ! Thou soul at peace ! Return unto thy Lord, content in His good pleasures ! Enter thou among My bondmen ! Enter through My Garden ! (Sura : The Dawn : Part : 30)

Now, these people would march forward so as to reach into the Paradise. At that moment, they would be witnessing the Paradise but would not find any path

leading them into the Paradise. Thereupon, these people would come to Hadrat Adam (peace be on him) and beseech him : O our father ! Please get the path of paradise opened for us ! Adam (peace be on him) would say : O brethren ! I am not in this position. Hence, you should go to Abraham (peace be upon him). However, with the intercession of Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), a bridge will, at last, be installed there between Heaven and Hell, which is called *Pul Sirat* a bridge over which the righteous Muslims will pass into the Heaven. They will have to pass over it, and, at that moment, intercession will again be allowed. And our Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) will, first of all, cross over that bridge along with his followers (*ummat*), and on that day, no one, save Allah's Messengers (Prophets) will have the daring to say any thing, and the Messengers would be repeatedly uttering the words: "O God ! Let them pass over with safety ! O Allah! It is Thou only Who can guide the ship of our fate to safe shores and it is Thou Who will enable us to cross it over." So, those people, who were obedient to Allah's Messengers (Prophets), will pass over this bridge only with the intercession of Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) according to the measurement of their deeds and the positions accorded to them in such a manner that some of them will cross over it in the twinkling of an eye; some like the lightning ; some in an instant like the air ; and some will pass over it like birds. (*Bukhari*).

And a Muslim of the lowest degree, drenched in sins, will, in the like manner, pass over this bridge

with faltering steps, within the duration of seven thousand years. Hadrat Fazil bin 'Ayyaaz (mercy be on him) says : The exact length of the *Pul Sirat* is of three thousand years ; its ascent is of one thousand years and its descent is of one thousand years while its peak is also of one thousand years, whose surface is a level plain. In a word, it would be such a terrible place that even the Messengers of Allah would utter helplessly : O Allah ! Peace ! Peace ! (*Jawahir-ul-Tafasir*). And from there, these people will set out towards Paradise in numerous groups, and when they will reach near Heaven, the doors of it will be found already lying open in anticipation of their arrival so that there may not be the slightest delay in their entering into it. Then the guardian angels, who will already be present there to welcome them, will offer them Islamic salutation. In other words, they will say : Peace be on you. And, after these greetings they will say : Enter this Paradise therein for all time.

The Time when the People will be Caused to Rise up from their Graves

The Jurist Abu-al-Laith (mercy be on him) says that when the people will be made to rise up from their graves on the Resurrection Day, they will continue to stay there in this very condition for seventy years, and no attention will be given to them and, in this very anxiety, they will weep so vehemently that no tears will be left in their eyes, instead of tears, blood will start flowing down from their eyes. Subsequent to this, they will be called towards the plain of Resurrection, and the angels will start descending

from the skies. The angels belonging to one heaven will come down in a separate circle and stand up behind the angels belonging to another heaven. "A day when the heaven with the clouds will be rent asunder and the angels will be sent down a grand descent. The Sovereignty on that day will be the True (Sovereignty) belonging to the Beneficent One (that is, no one save Him, will have any say in the reckoning, award and punishment), and it will be a hard day for disbelievers. On the day when the wrong-doer bites his hands, he will say : Ah ! Would that I had followed the path of righteousness along with the Apostle of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Ah ! Would that I had never taken such a one for friend ! He verily led me astray from the True Lesson after it had reached me. Satan was every-man's deserter in the hour of need." (The detail of which is given in Sura Abraham). (Sura : The Criterion : Part : 19).

According to another tradition the Holy Prophet affirmed : "The Most Just Lord will declare at that moment "O human being ! I had warned thee in the mortal world. Your deeds are before thee to-day. He who finds his Roll of Deeds full of virtues should offer thanks to the Lord Almighty ; and he whose Roll of Deeds contains no virtue should blame himself for having paid no heed to the commands of God. Thereafter at the command of the Lord God that sinful man will be caused to suffer torments. Upon this sight all other men shall bend on their knees. This has been referred to in Sura Jathia, which affirms : "You shall see all classes bent on their knees and each group

shall be called to account in respect of their Roll of Deeds. After that, adjudication between the people will commence so much so that justice would be done even in case of animals and, for a she-goat without horns, the she-goat with horns would be avenged. Then the animals will be commanded to become dust (their case being finalized). At that moment, the disbelievers would desire for the like treatment, and a disbeliever would say : "Would that I had become dust".

In a hadith, Haḍrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said, that on the Day of Resurrection, the people would be naked just as they were naked at the time of their birth from the womb of their mothers. Haḍrat 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) said : Messenger of Allah, will it not be a matter of shame to be naked in the presence of all others when each will be looking upon the other ? They will be seeing each other in nakedness. Haḍrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : The people will, at that moment, be entangled in their own misfortune (anxiety) to such an extent that they will find no time to look upon each other. The eyes of all of them will be fixed upward. Every person will be drenched in perspiration according to the gravity of his evil deeds.

Every person will be drenched in sweat to the extent of his evil deeds. Someone will be drenched in perspiration upto his feet ; somebody upto his shin and (shank of the leg) ; some person upto his abdomen ; and some other person upto his mouth. The angels will have formed a circle around the four sides of the Empyrean (the highest sphere where the throne of God is). At that time, each and every person will be called by his name. He will present himself there by coming out of the crowd. The moment he will be caused to stand up before the Almighty God, an announcement will be made to the effect that those, who have any claim against him, should come forward. Every person, who has any right against him or will have any wrong done to himself by that person, will be called one after the other, and his rights will be returned to him out of the virtues of that person. And if that person would have earned no virtues or in case there will remain nothing of his virtues, then the evil deeds of the persons wronged by him will be added to his record, and when he will, alongwith his own vices, take the vices of others, he will be asked to go into his Raging Fire, *i.e.* the Raging Fire of Hell. There is an account of it in Sura, The Calamity). Upon the sight of this severe reckoning and doom, there will be none such favourite angel or prophet, who will not be terrified for his own sake save those whom Almighty God will keep in safety. At that event, every person will be called to account for four things *viz.* : (1) In what work did you pass away your worldly life ; (2) To what use did you put your body ? (3) For what end did you put your learning into practice ? (4) and whence did you earn your wealth and where did you spend it? Ikrama (may Allah be pleased with him) says : On that day, father will tell his son that I was your father. He will also remind his son the favours he had done to him. The son will affirm the favours of his father After this, father will tell his son that he needs only

one virtue—even a tiny part of it—because, due to it my scale of good works may perhaps become weighty. The son will tell him that he himself is undergoing the same misfortune. I am ignorant in what position I am and that what is going to happen to me. I am not in a position to give you any virtue. Then, that person will also ask his wife to remember the favours he had done to her in the world as well as the kind of relationship he had with her and then will beg for one virtue. She too will refuse in the like manner. In a word, he will continue to wander so as to beg for a virtue. This is the thing about which the Almighty Allah hath said : "And (on the day) no burdened soul can bear another's burden (of sin) and if one heavily laden crieth for (help with) his load, naught of it will be lifted (*i.e.*, will not render to him his help of any kind) even though (unto whom he crieth) be of him." (Sura The Angels : R-3).

This tradition narrated by 'Ikrama (may Allah be pleased with him) has been explained in more clear words in *Durr-e-Manthur*, the translation of which is as follows :—

"In the first instance, father will enquire from his son about the manner in which he behaved with him in the world. The son will praise very highly of his father's treatment unto him. Upon this the father will say to his son : O my son ! I beg you only for one virtue which may, perhaps, embrace me with success (forgiveness). The son will reply : O father ! You have asked for a very little thing but, despite this, I am utterly helpless, as I am also experiencing the same fear that you are. Thereafter, the same will be

the dialogue between him and his wife."

And the commandment of Allah : "On the day when a man fleeth from his brother." (Sura 'Abasa). Further, there is a warning from Allah : O people ! Be afraid of your Lord, and of the day when neither any father could fulfil the demand of his son and nor any son could meet even with the slightest demand of his father. No doubt, the covenant of Allah is true (that this day would come without fail). So the worldly life may not deceive you so much so that you, being involved in it, may forget that day. The deceiving Satan may also not delude you to the extent that you may become careless of that day. "But when the shout cometh on the day, when a man fleeth from his brother." (Sura 'Abasa). So the day when there will be a shout making the ears deaf (*i.e.*, when the Resurrection will take place), it will be that day when a man will flee from his mother and his father, and his wife and children (No one will be of any avail to the other). Every person that day will have concern enough to make him heedless of others. While explaining this holy verse, Qatada (mercy be on him) says : On the Resurrection Day, every person will be perplexed to the effect that some identifiable relative of his may not happen to see him, fearing that he may not put to him any of his demand. This subject has been explained in the Holy Qur'an, time and again, under various titles. This has been stated in Sura Baqara like this : "And guard yourselves against a day when no soul will in aught avail another (*e.g.*, one's prayer will not be accepted in favour of another) ;

nor intercession will be accepted from any one, nor compensation will be received from any one and nor they will be helped. (It is absolutely impossible that someone may save them from their doom)." All the probable ways in which help could be rendered have been negated in this Qur'anic verse because there can be only four agencies through which someone can be helped *viz.* : (1) some strong person may interfere and prevent the doom by his strength. This is called victory. Its negation has been made ; (2) some person may prevent the torment without using his power. It is of two kinds : The one is to prevent the torment without getting any remuneration ; and this is called intercession. The other is to prevent it by offering some compensation in lieu thereof. It is of two kinds: (*i*) Either to compensate physically or (*ii*) to compensate monetarily. These have also been negated. Similarly this subject has also been explained under various titles in the Holy Qur'an on diverse occasions. About this subject it should be kept in mind that, in the first instance, it relates to the non-believers, which incidentally abounds in with all the things as aforesaid, to the effect that neither any Prophet nor any friend of Allah, nor any angel, howsoever a favourite one, can save disbelievers from torment. The second subject relates to the Muslims who are sinners, in respect of whom have also been revealed such verses and hadiths (All these relate to some particular time). Thereafter, intercession will be allowed. So, this subject has been explained at various places in the Qur'an. At one place, it has been told: "On that day no intercession availeth save (that of) him unto

whom the Beneficent hath given leave and whose intercession He accepteth. (Sura Ta Ha). The Holy Qur'an abounds in with such subjects, but the fact that in whose favour intercession is permitted is not known to any one. Thus every person should remain hopeful of the Mercy of Almighty God but there is no certainty for anyone. Consequently, this hardest day is a day of extreme dread and danger. Whatsoever can be done for the alleviation of its severity it can be done today only. Charity in abundance has to play a great part in the prevention of the gravity and hardness of that day.

It is a well-known saying of Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) : Guard yourselves against the Fire of Hell, even with the charity of half of a date fruit. Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said : Charity effaces faults in the same manner in which water extinguishes fire. (*Itha'f*). It is the saying of the Holy Prophet that on the Resurrection Day every person will be under the protective shade of his Charity. (*Itha'f*). In other words, the shade will be as much thick as will be the volume of charity. On the Day of Resurrection when, due to intensity of heat, man will find himself drenched in perspiration upto his mouth. Hadrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : Charity also propitiates the anger of the Almighty God, and also is a means of protection against a painful death. (*Mishkat*). There is a will of Hadrat Luqman (mercy be on him) left for his son that he should spend in charity when any fault is committed by him. (*Ihya*). It is a well-known

narration that a badly corrupt woman was forgiven in lieu of offering water to a dog for his drinking. 'Ubaid b. 'Umair says : On the Day of Resurrection the people will be most hungry and thirsty, as well as absolutely naked. But the person, who would have given food to someone, would be offered food by the God to eat And that person, who in the way of Allah, would have offered water to someone, he would be given water to drink. And the person who, in the name of Allah, would have given clothes to others, he would also be granted clothes to wear. On the Day of Resurrection, those belonging to Hell will be caused to stand in one line ; and then there will happen to pass by them a true Muslim (friend of Allah). At that time, one person will say to him that he should intercede with the Almighty Allah in his favour. He will ask him : Who are you ? That denizen of Hell will say : Do you know me not ; I am that person who had provided you with water to drink at such time. In another hadith, it has been narrated like this: On the Day of Resurrection, when the people belonging to Heaven and Hell will be asked to line up, one man from amongst the line of the denizens of Hell Fire happens to see a man standing in the line of the inmates of Paradise and try to remind him that he had done some favour to him in the world. Thereupon, that person will, by catching his hand, bring him before the Almighty God and will pray : O Allah ! He had done me such favour. He will thus be forgiven by the Merciful God. There is also a tradition of the Holy Prophet that there will be a pronouncement on the Day of Resurrection : Where are the poor belonging

to the *Ummat* (nation) of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ? Stand up and search out those people from the Resurrection Plain who had, only in My Name, given you a morsel of food or a draught of water, or new/old cloth, and bring them into the Paradise by holding their hands. Upon this, the poor of the *Ummat* will rise up and will choose them and bring them into the Heaven. There is another hadith to the effect that on the Day of Resurrection a pronouncement will be made : Where are those people who had invited the poor and the orphans to partake of food ? Today, you should enter into the Heaven in a manner which may indicate that neither you have any fear nor any grief.

Any person, who removes some misfortune of another Muslim, God will remove some of his misfortunes on the Day of Resurrection. And a person who conceals in the world the weakness of someone Almighty God will conceal his sins also on the Day of Resurrection.

A person, who helps his distressed brother, the Almighty God will keep him steadfast on the Day when the mountains will be removed from their actual place (that is, the Day of Resurrection).

Recompense shall have to be Made on the Day of Judgement

Hadrat 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) has stated that a man called on the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and submitted : "O Apostle of God, I own many slaves. They lie to me; embezzle my money; disobey my orders.

I reprimand them and beat them. What settlement will be made between them and myself on the Judgement Day ?" The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) replied : "On the Day of Judgement, the extent to which they have embezzled your money or lied to you or have disobeyed your orders all this will be weighed, (for there on that Day all things will be weighed, whether those things have physical mass or are without substance of mass) and the punishment you have dealt out to your slaves for these faults of theirs shall also be weighed. Hence if their faults and your punishment are even on the scales, you owe nothing to the slaves, nor do they owe you anything. In case your punishment is less than the weight of their faults, the balance shall be credited in your favour; if your punishment exceeds in weight to their faults, you shall be avenged for this excess." Upon hearing this that person departed from the meeting weeping in sorrow. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Have you not read the verse 4 of Surah Anbiya' of the Holy Qur'an (the translation of this verse is as follows) : "We shall instai Scales of Justice on the Day of Judgement (on which deeds shall be weighed) and none shall be caused to suffer even the slightest injustice; and even if someone's deed is found equal in weight to a grain of corn, We shall take that deed into account on that Day and We shall weigh that deed on the Scales of Justice. Verily, We alone suffice to call everyone and everything to account." The accounts that shall have to be rendered on the Day of Judgement is a very serious matter indeed. Upon this subject serious warnings and grim details

have been profusely given in the Holy Qur'an and traditions. For example, reference is made here to the following few verses and traditions :

(1) "And be in fear of the Day on which ye shall be taken to the presence of the Magnificent, Just Lord. On that Day each man shall receive full recompense for his deeds and none shall be caused to suffer cruelty of any kind."

(2) "The Day on which each man shall be confronted with any good that he has done and anything bad that he has performed; and that man would wish that this Day would have been far removed from the day on which he had performed good or bad deeds. God Almighty, therefore, commands you to fear him. God is Merciful to his Creatures and it is out of this Mercy that he commands you to fear him lest you should suffer torment."

(3) "And he who misappropriates what is given him in trust, he shall produce this misappropriated article on the Plain of Resurrection and then this man shall receive a befitting award for his deeds."

(4) "Each man shall inevitably experience the taste of death and your deeds (good or bad) shall receive a befitting award on the Day of Eternity."

(5) This expression has been revealed in the Holy Qur'an at various places to the effect that the Most Magnificent, Just Lord will soon settle the accounts. (The account of each man shall be settled and befitting awards shall be made unto each man according to his deserts).

(6) "And on that Day (on the Day of Judgement) deeds must be weighed on the Scales. Hence those

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men will embrace success who have the balance of good deeds in their favour; and those whose virtues bear slight weight, will be the losers, for they transgressed the rights contained in our verses."

(7) "Let there be no doubt about it that Our reporters (the angels) are keeping a record of all your mischiefs and when their written evidence shall be produced before Us on the Day of Judgement, you shall receive a befitting award for all your mischiefs."

(8) "And those who performed evil deeds, they would receive a befitting punishment for their evil-doings; and evil would overwhelm them and there would be none to save them from the wrath of God. Their faces would be blackened, as if they were wrapped in layers upon layers of the darkness of the night."

(9) Each man shall know the assessment of his deeds that he had performed in the mortal world. He will know what sorts of evils he had committed and what kind of good deeds he had performed ; and all his accounts will be squarely settled.

(10) Those who obeyed the commands of their Lord shall receive fair award and those who disobeyed the commands of the Lord, they should make expiation by giving away all their worldly possessions—nay they should give away their worldly possessions twice over ; for they shall be severely called to account."

(11) So it is up to the Apostle of God to convey the commands of the Almighty and the responsibility of rendering accounts of obeying or disobeying those commands lies upon us.

(12) "O Lord of all of us ! Grant forgiveness to me and my parents and to all the pious people on the

Day of Judgement. So prayed Hadrat Abraham (peace be upon him).

(13) "And ye shall behold the sinners on that Day shackled in chains and their upper garments will be drenched in Qutran (the oil of the pine tree ; for this oil is highly inflammable like petrol) and their faces will be wrapped around by flames. (And why do they suffer such torments ?) Because God must punish each man for his evil-doings. Verily, the Magnificent Lord will soon call everyone to account."

(14) "And We have caused each man to carry his deeds (good or evil) like a halter round his neck ; and on the Judgement Day we shall present him with his scroll of deeds which shall be unrolled before him and We shall ordain him to go through the scroll of his deeds, and We shall tell him ; you be the sole judge of your own deeds and you need no one else to judge you."

(15) "Whatsoever the infidels conceive is untrue. We keep a written record of everything uttered by the tongue of a man. Hereinafter on the Day of Judgement, that written scroll of his deeds shall be laid before him."

(16) "The time has come near for people to render their accounts and they are still indolent and neglect to prepare themselves for meeting their doom."

(17) "On Doomsday when the clarion shall be sounded, such terror will spread around that all relationships will be severed (all people shall become as strangers) unto one another ; father shall desert his sons."

And no one shall enquire after the other (the

scales) for weighing the deeds will be set up. Hence the balance of virtues is in favour of whosoever, he will embrace success ; and those whose balance of virtues is slight, they will be the people who will have incurred great loss and they shall remain in Hell for ever. Their faces will be burnt, scarred and distorted out of shape by Hell-Fire.

(18) And the deeds of the infidels (who are removed from the light of faith) are like a mirage. (In a desert plain the glaring sand gives the illusion of water to a thirsty man from afar, but when he comes near, he finds no water at all), so will the infidels find nothing at the end ; and the Most Magnificent Lord will settle their accounts fully there and then ; and the Almighty shall soon call every one to account.

(19) Those who have gone astray from the path of God, severe punishment awaits them ; for they are the people who are forgetful of the Great Day of Rendering of accounts.

(20) This Day (the Doomsday) each man shall receive recompense for his doings. This Day no injustice shall be done. Verily, the Magnificent Lord shall call upon every one to render accounts.

(21) And ye shall behold (on Doomsday) the people of every creed collapsing on their knees out of fear. People of every creed shall be brought near to their book (the scroll of their deeds) and they shall be told : "This is Our book which contains the record of your deeds. It contains true description of your doings. We had appointed angels to record your deeds in the mortal world and this record now lies before you.

(22) When two copyists (the angels who quickly

write down reports) continue to take down, (while one angel is sitting on the right side of a man, the other one sits on his left side) and no sooner does the man utter a word than the vigilant angel writes it down promptly. This is how the scroll of deeds is prepared.

(23) On the Day when you shall be produced before the Almighty God for the settlement of your accounts, none of your deeds shall remain hidden. Thereafter each man's scroll of Deeds shall be handed over to him. The man to whom shall be given the deed-scroll in his right hand, will (in great rejoicing) say to the others, "Here, read my deed scroll. I had believed already that I would have to render accounts and so I had been preparing for it in the mortal world." Hence this man shall live in the highest Heaven a life full of delights. The fruits of heaven will bend low and the heavenly people shall be told "Eat and drink to your delight and this We give unto you in recompense for deeds that you performed in the past world." And the man to whom the Deed scroll shall be given in his left hand will say : "Would that I had not known my accounts ! Would that death (which had overtaken me) had closed all accounts ! Alas my riches availed me not ! My worldly pomp deserted me."

In respect of this man it shall be ordained : Hold him ; put a halter round his neck ; then throw him into hell and shackle him in a chain seventy feet long.

(24) And We have appointed over you angels who remember your deeds, and who are honourable and they commit to writing every deed of yours. They are familiar with all your doings and keep a record of

them. On the Day of Judgement all this record will be produced.

(25) So the man to whom the scroll of Deeds will be given in his right hand, shall be put through an easy trial and after passing through the trial, he will approach his relations in great joy. And the man to whom the Deed scroll is given in his left hand from his backside will call upon death (as one calls upon death in times of distress) and that man shall enter Hell. This man used to live happily in his worldly home and had illusions to the effect that he would never have to come before the Almighty God.

(26) Verily, every one of them shall return to Us. And it is for Us to call them to account.

(27) When the earth (by means of a quake) will be caused to move at full velocity (when the quake is world-wide the magnitude of its intensity is evident) and the earth shall disgorge every mass (treasures, hoards or corpses) buried inside it, then man will be struck with great wonder and will exclaim : "What has happened to this earth !" On that Day the earth will stand witness to all the good or bad deeds performed over its surface, because earth will be commanded to furnish such evidence to your Lord Almighty. On that Day various classes of people (the companions, the heavenly people, the people of Hell ; each class) shall consist of various groups. Some groups of people will ride, some will walk ; some other groups of people will be dragged from their faces. In brief, there will be several groups and classes of people who will return to the Lord so that they may behold their deeds which they had performed in the mortal world. Hence

whosoever performs even the slightest bit of goodness in this world will see it (this small goodness) on that Day ; and whosoever performs even the slightest bit of evil in this world will behold it on that Day.

These twenty-seven verses in respect of Recompense and rendering of accounts in the next world have been mentioned only as an illustration. Apart from these there are hundreds of verses dealing with this subject under various headings which were revealed by the Almighty. Similarly there are thousands of reported traditions which describe the severe conditions prevailing on the Day of Judgement and those traditions are too many to be incorporated here.

But it is imperative that sometime at least, out of all that time which is wasted in earning the goods of this world should be spent usefully in making provisions for the next world. There is ample time yet ; and much can be done. Soon the time will come when nothing except remorse will be left unto you.

Intercession on the Plain of Doom*

It is reported in a tradition that on Doomsday the people of Hell shall be caused to stand in a line. A Muslim (a man of Heaven) will pass by this line. One man out of this line will say to the inmate of Paradise "Intercede with the Lord Almighty in my favour." The inmate of Paradise will enquire : "Who are you ?" The denizen of Hell will say "Don't you recognize me ? Once you asked for water from me in the mortal world and I gave you water to drink." Upon this the

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*Mishkat.

inmate of Paradise will recommend him to God and God shall accept him into His favour. In the like manner another man will say to the heavenly person, you had asked from me such and such a thing in the mortal world and I had given it to thee.

According to another tradition, a heavenly person shall pass near the line of people of Hell and one man from this line will call out to the heavenly person, "Dost thou not recognize me ? I am the same man who gave you water to drink on such and such a day and I gave you water to perform ablutions on such and such occasions."

According to another tradition it is reported that when the people of Heaven and the people of Hell have been caused to stand in their respective places on the Doomsday, one man from among the people of Hell will happen to cast his glance upon a man standing in the line of the people of Paradise. The denizen of Hell will ask him to recollect the favour that the hellish man had done to the heavenly man in the mortal world. Upon this, the heavenly man will hold the hand of the hellish person and shall supplicate before the Just Lord : "O Lord ! I am beholden to this man for such and such a favour." Thereupon the Most Righteous Lord shall ordain : "Admit him in Paradise for the blessings of the Lord are now upon him."

In another tradition it is reported : "You must frequently sit in the company of the sages and do service unto them : for they indeed possess great wealth." Someone submitted, "O Apostle of God, what kind of wealth is that ?" The Holy Prophet

(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) replied : "They (the sages) will be told on the Day of Judgement. Whomsoever gave a morsel to eat, or gave you water to drink or made a gift of dress to you in the mortal world, hold him by the hand and lead him into Paradise."

It is reported in another tradition "The Most Magnificent and Just Lord shall render explanation to the sages as a man offers explanations to another man and the Lord God will ordain : "We swear by our Honour and all Our Might that We kept worldly things away from you, not because you were base and lowly in Our eyes, but because We had ordained great honour for thee this Day. Go My man unto the ranks of denizens of Hell. Whosoever among them gave you to eat for My sake or gave you a dress that man is yours." The sage shall join the group of the hellish people and shall find every one of them bathed in the sweat of shame upto his teeth. The sage will recognize his benefactor and holding him by the hand will lead him into Heaven.

Another tradition relates "It will be pronounced on the Doomsday : where are the sages of the Ummah of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ? Arise, and search out any man in the plain of Doom who gave up a morsel for My sake or gave you a drink of water in My name or made you a gift of a new or old dress in order to please Me. Hold such men by the hand and admit them into Paradise." Upon this, the sages from among the Ummah of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) will arise and holding someone by the hand will submit

"O Lord ! this man gave me water to drink." There will be no sages, high or low, from among the followers of Muhammad, who will not get these denizens of Hell admitted into Paradise."

A tradition states, "Whosoever gives meal to a hungry living being, the Most Righteous High Lord shall feed that person with the choicest dishes of Paradise."

It is reported in a tradition : "The Household from where food is given out to people, the Lord's blessings rush towards that household with the fastness of a sharp knife that cuts through the hump of a camel."

Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mubarak used to feed people with the choicest date fruit and used to say : "Whoever will eat the largest number of dates, I shall give him one dirham for each date that he has eaten."

It is related in a tradition : "On Doomsday a herald shall pronounce "where are the people who showed favours to the sages and the destitute ? Enter ye into heaven, because there is no fear nor remorse for you." And another herald shall pronounce, "Where are the people who went to enquire after the health of the sick beggars and destitute people ? Come ye and sit on the seats of light and converse with the Most Magnificent Lord. Apart from these people, the others will suffer the severe trial of rendering the accounts."

In another tradition it is reported : "There are numberless Houris whose alimony (dower payable on marriage) is only a handful of dates or any other thing of equal quantity."

According to another tradition : "There is no better charity than feeding the hungry."

A tradition states : "Feeding the hungry is one of those things that lead to salvation."

In a tradition it is related : "Among the deeds that are dearest unto God are the following works : to please a Muslim ; to alleviate his sorrow ; to clear his debts or to feed him when he is hungry."

In other words any one of these works which is feasible is good for they are all dearest unto God.

In another tradition it is reported : "Among the deeds that bring salvation are : to afford pleasure to a Muslim ; to satisfy his hunger and to alleviate his suffering."

According to another tradition : "He who attends to the worldly need of a brother Muslim, the Most Magnificent and Just Lord will provide satisfaction for his seventy-two wants and the lightest among these wants which will be satisfied is the salvation of that man from his sins." This implies that other wants are even higher than salvation.

Happiness or Sorrow on the Faces

Every one will be present on the Doomsday. The faces of the pious people of God will be fair and radiant with happy smiles ; the faces of the infidels and the sinful will bear the signs of sorrow and ignominy. The Almighty has affirmed in Surah al-'Imran : "On the Day when some faces will be fair and the others will be dark. Hence those who wear darkness on their faces they shall be asked : "Didst thou turn infidel after acquiring faith. Hence suffer tortures because of your

infidelities." And those whose faces will be fair, they will be in the orbit of God's blessings and will remain there for ever. The faces of some will be radiant with the light of faith and piety and they shall appear happy, full of cheer with dignity and honour. In contrast to them the faces of others will be smeared with the blackness of infidelity and sin. Their faces will bear the signs of baseness and disgrace. The outward appearance of every one will be a mirror unto his innerself, the face of each one will be the index to his innerself. The Lord has observed in Surah Ubbas : "This Day numberless faces will glow with happiness and smile with good cheer and the other numberless faces will be covered with dust and smeared with blackness. These latter will be infidels and the sinful."

Punishment for the Tyrannical Ruler

The pious people will have radiant faces due to their faith and pure deeds. Their faces will appear glowing with happiness and good cheer ; and those inadequate fools who were forgetful of God Almighty in the mortal world ; who kept aloof from the light of faith and pure deeds and were immersed in the darkness of disbelief and sinful living, the faces of those people will be smeared with blackness on the Doomsday. They shall be produced on the plain of Doom in a base and disgraceful condition. They shall be suffering from the pangs of remorse due to their evil deeds and will realise with great terror that they shall meet with dire punishment and confront such havoc that will break them down.

The Most Exalted person of the world the Holy

Apostle (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed : "On Doomsday Haḍrat Abraham (peace be upon him) will chance to meet his father Azar. Abraham's father's face will be black and covered with dust. Haḍrat Abraham (peace be upon him) will say to his father : "Did I not say unto you, do not transgress the Divine Law ?" His father will reply : "This day I shall not disobey you." Thereafter Haḍrat Abraham (peace be upon him) will make his petition to the Almighty God. "O Lord Thou gave me a promise not to disgrace me on the Day of Judgement. What more disgrace there can be that my father is going to meet destruction." Almighty God shall ordain: "I have made it unlawful for the infidels to enter Paradise." (Your father will not find salvation from the tortures of Hell and shall not enter Paradise). Then it will be enquired from Haḍrat Abraham : "What lies at your feet ?" Haḍrat Abraham (peace be upon him) will look at his feet and find there a hyena besmeared with dirt. Thereafter this hyena will be dragged from its feet and thrown into Hell. (*Bukhari*).

The Most Illustrious Lord Almighty will convert Azar into a hyena by his power in order to save Haḍrat Abraham from humiliation and in order that he may not be struck with pity at the sight of his father. Good Lord! think whose father will meet this end? It is the father of Haḍrat Abraham (peace be upon him). The very same Haḍrat Abraham who is the patriarch of all prophets and a friend of the Almighty God; Abraham in respect of whose people it was ordained that the Holy Prophet should follow them; Abraham who was the builder of the House of

God. Even Abraham's intercession on behalf of his father was not acceptable to God! Where then stand the saints and beggars who take pride on their parentage and relationship to elevated personages and who, despite committing sins, are trusting upon their relationships for finding salvation in the next world?

A Description of the Assessment and Weighing of Deeds

First of all the accounts of *Namaz* shall be assessed in this way : How many 'prayers' (*Namaz*) this man has offered during his lifetime and how many 'prayers' are due from him? And how many objections, physical or spiritual, he has fulfilled, and how many supererogatory prayers he had offered? If he had neglected to perform some obligations, then seventy supererogatory prayers could be taken for one missed obligation.

Namaz shall appear in human form. The 'prayers' which were offered without sincere devotion, remembrance of God and compliments and duty to the Holy Prophet will appear bereft of hands and feet. The 'prayers' in which the above-mentioned duties were duly performed and observed will appear in an embellished form. Thereafter the accounts of other physical prayers such as keeping fast, performance of Hajj (pilgrimage), payment of religious Zakat (poor-due) and fighting in the cause of Allah will be assessed in the like manner. Moreover, accounts regarding piety, thirst for religious knowledge, murder, injury, eating and drinking, unlawful purchase and selling of goods, and fulfilling of the right of people etc. shall be examined. The tormented shall receive recompense

from the tyrants according to the following rule : If there are any virtues to the credit of the tyrants, those virtues (in proportion to the tyranny committed) shall be credited to the account of the victim of his tyranny. And if there be no virtues in the account of the tyrant, then the sins of the tormented person (in proportion to the tyranny that he endured) shall be transferred to the account of his tormentor, save that the faith and beliefs of the tyrants shall in no case be transferred to the account of their victims. There will be some generous and large hearted people who, trusting upon the blessings and bounties of God, will gift their virtues to others without consideration. It is related in tradition that "Two such men will be present near the Scales of Justice, that the virutes of one will be equal to his sins, and the other man will have only one virtue to his credit. The former shall be ordained : "If you beg one virtue from someone else the balance of goodness may tilt in your favour and you will then find justification for entering into Paradise. That helpless man will beg from everyone, but will not succeed anywhere. At last he will return empty-handed. When latter person shall come to know of the former's plight, he will say to the former person : "Brother I possess but one virtue. In spite of all your goodness, no one gifted you a single virtue. Who will then gift virtues to me? Here, take my one virtue so that your salvation may be ensured. I leave my case to God's mercy." Upon this, the Merciful God, out of His immense bounty and kindness, shall ordain : "Take these men to Paradise and let them abide there in the same and equal position."

All big and small virtues will be put on the scales, but they will carry weight in proportion to faith. In other words, the more firm and purer the faith is, the greater weight will the virtues bear. As it is related in a tradition[1] : One man shall have ninety-nine vices and one virtue when these will be weighed the man will submit to the court of the Almighty : "O Lord, of what consequence is this one virtue which I possess in comparison with so many vices. Therefore, this virtue should not be weighed. When it is obvious that I deserve Hell, send me there without weighing my one virtue". At that time God will ordain : "We are not unjust. This one virtue must be weighed in the scales." So when that one virtue will be put in the scales against the sins, the scale bearing virtue will bend and the man will be adjudged as a deserver of Paradise.

Shah Rafi-ud-Din (God's mercy be upon him) observes : "According to my knowledge this one virtue will be martyrdom in the cause of Almighty God, which washes away all other sins." Only God knows better. Although opinions differ among the ulama regarding the narrow bridge over which the faithful shall pass into Heaven and "the Scales of Justice," but it is evident that there shall be many scales. As a matter of fact the Holy Verse وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِيْنَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ bears this very meaning. Similarly it appears as a fairs urmise that there will be many narrow bridges over which the pious shall pass into Heaven. Whether they shall be set up for people of each faith or each nation

(1) This tradition upto the end has been related in *Tirmidhi*.

separately only God knows better.

Before passing from the plain of Doom over the bridge of Paradise is ordained, darkness will spread over the entire plain of Doom. Hence the faithful of each prophet shall be commanded to move with their Apostles. The believers shall be awarded with two candles of resplendent light each. One candle shall precede them and the other one shall move along their path on the right side. Those who will be inferior in privilege to them, they shall be given one candle each. Those who will be inferior still will find a little light around their toes and those who will be the lowest will be awarded the light of a flickering lamp which will light up and go out alternately.

Those who are hypocrites and are deprived of their personal light and hence will walk under the light of others and when they shall approach the edge of Hell they will observe that there is a narrow bridge over Hell which is thinner than a hair and sharper than the edge of a sword. It will be ordained : "Walk over it into Heaven." The sum and substance of all this is that when these people shall pass from the plain of Doom to the bridge of Paradise, a voice shall resound : "O people! close your eyes so that Fatimah (peace be upon her) daughter of Muhammad the Apostle (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) may pass over."

Thereafter some people will pass over the bridge with the speed of a flash of lightning, some with the speed of air, others with the speed of a camel and yet others with even slower speeds. Some people will walk over the bridge with great labour and hardship. On

that occasion huge hooks rise forth from Hell. These hooks will injure some people a little, and they will drag down some other people into Hell. Similarly, relationships and trusts will now appear alongside the people and those who had not cared for them in the mortal world, these hooks shall drag them down into Hell. At that time pure deeds like prayers, fasts, compliments to the Holy Prophet and supererogatory prayers will come to the aid of the people and charity shall stand as a barrier between them and Hell Fire. Sacrifice will serve them as a speed-horse. Due to the great frightfulness of that place, the voices of all will be stilled, save that the Apostles shall pronounce in favour of their respective faithful people.

(May Lord grant them protection).

On the Day of Doom

Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) states : "On the Day of Doom 'the world' shall be produced before the people in the form of an old woman, ugly, deep-sunken eyes, teeth bending outwards. The people shall be asked, "Do you recognise her?" They shall reply, "God protect us! What a horrible ugly thing is this!" The people will be told : "This is the same world for the sake of which one murdered the other, people forgot kindness in mutual dealings; for her sake you envied each other, nursed grudges against one another and you were caught in her deceitful trap." Thereafter this old woman will be thrown into Hell. She will cry, "Send with me those people also. Send along those who used to hanker after me." The Most Magnificent and Just Lord shall ordain : "Send alongwith her those people who used to hanker after her."

The Punishment for Him Who Evades Payment of Zakat (Poor-due)

Never should such people, who have been bestowed with riches by the Magnificent Lord, consider evading expense of riches good for themselves. On the contrary it would prove to be bad for them, for halters shall be hung round the necks of such people on the Day of Judgement. The riches (which they evaded to expend) will be converted into snakes which will be thrown round their necks; and in the end the sky and the earth (and all that is in them) will be left unto God (after people have died). Therefore, you should give away your possessions of your own accord so as to earn reward in the next world, otherwise, verily, all things belong to the Lord. And the Most Magnificent Lord is well aware of all your deeds." (Al 'Imran R. 18.) It is recorded in *Bukhari*, that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : Take the case of a man whom the Magnificent Lord has blessed with riches and he evades payment of Zakat. On Doomsday his riches will be converted into a snake with hairless hood (the fulness of venom and its deadly nature would have rendered the snakes' hood hairless). There will be two points under the mouth of the snake (these also are a symbol of the fulness of venom). This snake will be thrown round the neck of the man and seizing both jaws of the man the snake shall say to him : "See, I am your treasure."

The Punishment for not Expending in the Way of God

"Such people who hoard gold and silver and keep

them in treasures and do not spend in the way of God, you should convey to those people tidings of dreadful tortments. They shall be subjected to this torment on the day when these riches (gold and silver) will first be heated red in Hell Fire and then the foreheads, the chest-bones and the backsides of these people will be stamped with red-hot gold and silver and they shall be told, "This is the same gold and silver which you had hoarded for your use. Now suffer the taste of what you had amassed." (Taubah R : 5).

The learned have explained that the mention of 'foreheads etc.' means all the four sides of the human body. By forehead is meant the front part of the body; the chest bones imply the right and left sides; and the backside means the back part of the physique. The implication is that the entire body of a man will be stamped with red-hot metal. A tradition confirms this by relating that the human physique shall be stamped from head to foot. Some scholars have written that these three parts of the body are peculiarly delicate in so far as even the slightest pain in these parts feels intolerable. Some scholars have written that these three parts have been mentioned especially because when man sees a beggar in front of his face he turns his back upon the beggar and goes away. It is for this reason that these three organs have been exclusively selected to suffer torture.

The Punishment for not Expending Wealth on the Poor

"And the man to whom the scroll of deeds is handed over in his left hand he will wistfully exclaim :

"It would have been better if I had not received my Deed Scroll at all and if I had not known my accounts! It would have been better if death had closed every thing (Doomsday should not have come so that no account would have to be rendered). My wealth availed me not! My honour is gone!" As for this man the angels shall be ordained : "Take hold of him. Throw a halter round his neck. Then throw him into Hell and thereafter shackle him in a chain seventy yards long, because this man did not believe in the Almighty God. And (apart from not feeding the poor on his own account) he did not induce other people to give food to the poor. Hence he has no friend here, nor is there anything for him to eat save the pus of wounds which will be swallowed by none other than the greatest sinners."

The word *Ghusleen* popularly means the *Dhovan*, the water with which wounds have been washed. According to the interpretation of Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) by *Ghusleen* is meant the pus and blood which oozes out of the wound. Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri (mercy of Allah be upon him) reports a hadith of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that "If bucket of *Ghusleen* were to be thrown into the world, its foul smell would spread around the whole world and make everyone feel unpleasant."

Nauf Shami (God's mercy be upon him) reports that every yard of seventy years long chain is equal to seventy fathoms and the measure of each fathom is equivalent to the distance between the holy city of Mecca and Kufa.

It has been reported by Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) and other commentators that this chain shall be entered into the anus and bringing it out through the nostrils, it will then be thrown around the body so that the man will be completely shackled. (*Durr Manthur*). According to this holy verse he who does not induce others to feed the poor is also liable to punishment. Therefore we should make it a point to induce our relatives and friends to feed the poor and of course by inducing others to be charitable to the poor our own stinginess in this respect will be lessened.

The Punishment for not Expending Riches in the Cause of God

"There is a great punishment in store for a backbiter ; there is great punishment in store for him who taunts at others face to face, and there is a great punishment in store for him who amasses wealth and (for the love of it) counts it over and over again. He imagines that he shall possess this wealth for ever ; it is not so. This wealth will not remain with him for ever. In the name of God this man will be thrown into such a fire that whichever thing is caught in this fire is instantly burnt into pieces. Dost thou know what kind of a 'breaking' fire it is ? This is such a fire made by the Lord Almighty which shall rage through your hearts, (in other words, worldly fire touches the body of a man and eventually kills him ; but since there is no death in the next world, so Hell Fire shall touch the body and rage through the heart instantly and, verily, even a little pain in the heart is insufferable). This Fire shall

enclose these people from all sides while they will be surrounded by tall pillars.

Punishment for those who Embellish their persons and come out to Perform Evil Deeds

On one occasion the illustrious Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) while giving an account of his ascension to heaven observed : "In the next world I saw a group of men whose bodies were being cut into slices with pairs of scissors. I enquired from Gabriel (peace be upon him) : "Who are these people ?" Gabriel replied, "These are the very same people who used to embellish their persons" (and came out to do evil deeds). Then I saw a well. This well emitted foul smell and painful cries were coming out of it. I asked Gabriel (peace be upon him) : "Who are these people?" Gabriel (peace be upon him) replied: "These are the women who used to embellish their bodies (for fornication) and performed unlawful deeds." Then I beheld some men and women who were dangling, hung from their breasts downwards. I asked, "Who are these ?" To this Gabriel (peace be upon him) replied : "These are the people who reproached each other and indulged in backbiting" (*Durr Manthur*).

May the Magnificent Lord, out of His immense bounty, protect us from such things, for they entail severe punishment.

Those Who Misappropriate the Belongings of the Orphans

A tradition relates that on Doomsday some people

will arise from their graves in such condition that fire shall be raging in their mouths. Someone asked : "O Apostle of God who might these people be ?" In reply to this question the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) recited this verse : "Those who consume the riches of the orphans (they fill their bellies with Fire)." On the night of his visit to the heaven the illustrious Prophet (peace be upon him) beheld a people whose lips were as big as the lips of a camel. The angels had overpowered these people and the angels were cutting open the lips of these people and thrusting stones of fire into their mouths and the fire after entering the mouth was coming out from their anuses and those people were crying loudly and bitterly. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked Gabriel : "Who are these people ?" To this Gabriel replied : "These are the people who consumed the riches of the orphans. They are being fed with fire."

There is a tradition of the Holy Prophet that four are the types of persons whom God Almighty shall not send into Paradise, nor will such people ever taste the delights of Paradise. Firstly, a person who drinks liquor. Secondly, a person who lives on usury. Thirdly, a person who unjustly takes the goods belonging to orphans. Fourthly, a person who commits unfilial acts.

The Punishment for Preachers who do not Act according to what they Preach

The Holy Prophet has observed : "On Doomsday a man (a type of men, whatever their number) will be brought and thrown into Hell. His intestines will

hang out and the man will go round and round as the ass goes round and round the milling-stone (*i.e.* as an animal, oxen or an ass etc. goes round and round the flour-milling stone). The people of Hell will gather around him and shall enquire of him : "What happened to you? You used to instruct us to do good deeds and dissuaded us from doing wrong deeds ?" He will say in answer to this : "I used to instruct you, but did not act according to my own preachings." Another tradition relates that it is the holy saying of the Prophet of God (peace be upon him) : "On the night of my visit to the Empyrean I saw a class of men whose lips were being burnt into pieces by pairs of scissors, made of Hell-Fire. I asked Gabriel (peace be upon him) : "Who are these people ?" Gabriel told me, "These are such preachers from among your people who used to instruct others, but did not act according to their own preachings."

According to another tradition the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed : The 'Zabanita' shall seize the learned who practise evil even before they seize the unbelievers. Upon this the learned shall call out : What is this that we are being seized even before the infidels have been caught ? In reply they shall be told, "The learned and the ignorant are not on the equal footing, which means to say that you committed errors being in full knowledge of what you were doing." 'Zabanita' is that class of severe angels who are appointed to the task of committing people to Hell. Another tradition relates, "Some people will be thrown into Hell whose foul and rotten smell will upset even the denizens of Hell. These inmates

of Hell will say to these men : "What heinous deed did you commit curse of which is now upon you ? We had enough of hardships already. Your foul smell has added to our troubles and made us suffer ever more." These people shall make the reply : "We did not derive benefit from our knowledge." (*Targhib*).

The Punishment for not Offering Prayers

A tradition* relates, "The person who observes prayers will be honoured by the Most Magnificent Lord in five ways : One, the scarcity of his means will be alleviated. Second, he is exempted from the torments of the grave. Thirdly, on the Day of Doom the Deed Scroll will be handed over to him in his right hand, the detailed account of which has been given in Surah al-Haq'qa *i.e.* these to whom the scroll of deeds will be given in their right hands will go about merrily showing their deeds scrolls to other people.

Fourthly, they shall pass over the bridge of heaven with a lightning speed. Fifthly, they shall be exempted from rendering accounts. And he who shows reluctance in observing prayers, shall be tormented in fifteen different ways. Out of these he will experience five types of torments in the world, three types of torments at the time of his death, three types of torments in the grave and three types of torments on arising from the grave. The worldly torments are the following :

Firstly, his life is devoid of blessings. Secondly, the glow that appears on the faces of the pure is

*Tirmidhi.

removed from his face. Thirdly, all reward for his good deeds is cancelled out. Fourthly, his wishes are not granted. Fifthly, he loses his right to be remembered by the pious in their prayers. The three torments at the time of death are these :

Firstly, he dies in disgrace. Secondly, he dies in deprivation. Thirdly, he suffers from intense thirst at the moment of his death ; and such is the intensity of his thirst that the whole sea cannot quench it.

The three torments of the grave are as follows :

Firstly, the grave contracts around him so that his breast bones break and pierce into each other. Secondly, a fire is lit up in his grave. Thirdly, a snake is sent to overpower him. The appearance of the snake is such that its eyes are like fireballs ; its nails are made of iron and in length so big that their extremity could be reached only in a day's journey. This snake bites his corps and says 'I am the bare-headed snake'. Its voice is thunderous like lightning. The snake says: 'I have been appointed over you by my Lord in order to bite you till sunrise for having missed your morning prayers, and I am appointed to bite you till afternoon for missing the noon prayers, and then I am to bite you till sunset for having missed the afternoon prayers ; and I am to bite you till night-prayer's time for missing the evening prayers and for missing the night prayers I am appointed to bite you continuously till morning. When the snake bites him but once the corps sinks into the earth to the depth measuring the length of seventy hands. And in the same manner he will continue to suffer this torment till Doomsday. And after arising

from the grave he will suffer the following three tortures :

Firstly, he shall be severely called to account, Secondly, the wrath of the Most Just and Magnificent Lord will be upon him. Thirdly, he shall be thrown into Hell. All the above adds up to fourteen tortures. Possibly the fifteenth torture has been omitted through lapse of memory.

In another tradition it is related that three sentences will be writ large on the face of such a man : First sentence : O thou who wasted away thy obligation to Almighty God. Second sentence : O thou who art a special object of the wrath of God. Third sentence : As you wasted away thy obligation to God in the mortal world, so you are deprived of God's blessings this day.

The Punishment of a Haughty Man

1. Hadrat 'Umar b. Shu'ab (God be pleased with him) has reported a tradition of the beloved of the universe, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) : 'On Doomsday the haughty shall be like the ants. The people on the plain of Doom shall be trampling them underfoot. Fire shall engulf them from four sides. They shall be tortured in an exclusive dungeon of the Hell, which is called 'Bolus'. They shall be caught in a fiercely burning fire and they shall be given for drink the dirty dark blood taken from the wounds of the denizens of Hell. The inference is that these unfortunate people will be ·ly disgraced. (*Tirmidhi*).

2. Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased

with him) observed that according to a Holy tradition (Qudsi tradition is the one which is ascribed to Almighty) : "Loftiness and Grandeur are two sheets. He who snatches them from Me or tugs at them, I shall throw him into Hell. In other words these two attributes are exclusively Mine. All Grandeur and Veneration is befitting for My Own Self." (*Muslim, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah*).

3. There is a tradition reported by Hadrat Haritha bin Wahb (God's pleasure be upon him) that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Shall I not inform you about the people of Hell ? Every man who is hard-hearted ; every man who has fattened himself with unlawful gains ; every man who has adopted a haughty manner —Beware ! the man who shall have as little pride or haughtiness in his heart as an iota of a grain. God Almighty shall throw him down on his face into Hell-Fire.* (*Bukhari, Muslim*).

4. A tradition related by Hadrat Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) states : The Apostle

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*Some traditions mention the beggar and the destitute alongwith the haughty. As in 'Tibrani' it is related that three persons shall not enter heaven : One, the beggar who despite his poverty adopts a vain and haughty attitude. Secondly, an old man, who despite his old age, does not give up fornication ; Thirdly, the person who adopts humility and observes prayers in a manner as if he were doing a favour to the Almighty. The severity in the case of the beggar and the destitute is all the more because poverty and destitution should make a man polite ; on the other hand if a man is haughty even in poverty ; no one knows how haughty he would be if he were rich.

of God (may Allah be pleased with him) observed : "Shun pride. Pride is the sin which first of all ruined Satan. Shun greed. Greed is such an evil that it expelled Hadrat Adam (peace be upon him) out of Paradise. Shun envy for envy is such a terrible evil that it induced Qabil to murder Habil." (*Ibn 'Asakar*)

The inference is that Satan refused to bow before the Almighty God out of pride ; Adam (peace be upon him) ate the forbidden fruit because of greed ; and Qabil killed his brother out of envy.

The Punishment for those Who do not Observe Propriety While Urinating

In a detailed tradition Hadrat Shafi b. Matih Asabih (God's pleasure be upon him) reports the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) having said : "In Hell a certain man will be pulling his guts (intestines). The people of Hell will be much amazed and ask him : "What deeds did you perform?" He will say, "I did not observe propriety while urinating and sat every where without care in order to urinate." (*Tibrani, Kabir, Ibn Abi Dunya*).

Punishment for Him Who does not Keep Fasts

In a tradition reported by Hadrat Abu Umama (God be pleased with him) it is stated : "The Messenger of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had a dream and saw that some people were hanging upside down. Their jaws had been torn apart and they were bleeding. The Holy Prophet enquired : "Who are these people ?" In answer to this the Holy Prophet was told : "These people are those who did

not keep fasts and stopped fasting even before the month of Ramadan had come to a close." (*Ibn Khuzaima*).

Punishment for Building Extra Houses Beyond Need

In 'Tibrani' a tradition originally reported by Hadrat Ibn Mas'ud (God's pleasure be on him) has been recorded that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Whosoever builds more houses than he needs, on the Day of Doom it will be ordained that all his extra houses should be loaded on his back."

Hadrat Ammar b. Yasir (may God be pleased with him) reported that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : "Whenever a man raised his building above the height of eleven feet without need or reason or imperative necessity he is called "the chief of the wrong-doers" and he is asked : "How high do you wish to go." (*Ibn Abi Dunya*)

The Punishment for Him Who Usurps Land Belonging to Somebody Else

A tradition reported by Hadrat Yaalah bin Murra (God be pleased with him) states that the Holy Prophet (peac and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Whoever commits the tyranny of usurping the land measuring the length of a span belonging to another person, that land shall be thrown round his neck as a halter on the Day of Doom. And this measure of the length of a hand shall be increased seven-fold." In other words seven times the measure of usurped land

will be taken from the surface to the depth and a halter will be made and this halter will be thrown round the neck of that usurper." (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

The implication is that the usurper will be compelled to carry this load or he will be sunk into the ground and after having been buried in the ground upto his neck, he will automatically be wearing the halter of land around his neck.

Punishment for Backbiters or Slanderers

Hadrat 'Ala b. Harith narrates that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Those who accuse the innocent and those who go about backbiting, both classes of people shall be treated like dogs. (*Abul Shaikh*).

2. Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed that on the night of his visit to the heaven he saw a nation eating corpses and dead animals. He enquired : "Who are these people?" The Prophet was informed : "These are the people who used to eat the flesh of others *i.e.* they backbited others."

3. Hadrat Anas reported that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) during his ascension to heaven saw some people scratching their faces and breasts with their nails. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) enquired : "Who are these people?" Gabriel (peace be upon him) submitted in reply : "These are the people who used to eat the flesh of others. who backbited and brought calumnies against others." (*Abu Dawud*)

4. In a tradition reported by Hadrat Rashid b. Sa'd it is related that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "I saw some people who were hanging by the breasts." I enquired : "These people are those who found faults with others and brought calumnies against them." (*Ahmad*).

5. Hadrat Jabir b. 'Abdullah relates : "We were in the company of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) while a blow of foul-smelling wind came towards us." The Holy Prophet observed : "Do you know what sort of a wind is this? This wind carries the foul smell of those who accuse the faithful behind their back." (*Ahmad, Ibn Abi Dunya*).

6. Hadrat Abu Sa'id (may Allah be pleased with him) and Hadrat Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) report a tradition that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Backbiting is worse than adultery. Adultery is excused after penitence ; but backbiting cannot be excused until the person who has been maligned excuses the backbiter."

Punishment for Making Fun of the Believers and for Adopting a Double Faced Policy

Hadrat Hasan (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) made the following observation "A door of heaven will be opened and a certain man will be called. As the man approached near the door, it will be closed. Then the man will be called from the other door. That door will also be shut as he

approaches near. This treatment will be repeated until the man will leave in disappointment." (*Baihaqi*).

Such is the punishment of the man who used to make fun of others and used to deceive them.

2. Haḍrat Abu Huraira reports a tradition that the beloved Apostle of God observed : "The double-faced man is the worst of all. He wears one face to one man and then shows a different face to another one." (*Malik, Bukhari, Muslim*).

3. It has been reported by Haḍrat Sa'id b. Abi Waqqas that the Apostle of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "The double faced man who says one thing to a person and quite another to some other person, will have two mouths on the Day of Doom and both his mouths will be flame." (*Tibrani*).

4. According to a tradition reported by Abu Dawud : "For this man Fire shall have two tongues."

Sodomy and Sexual Intercourse with Animals

1. It is reported by Haḍrat Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "My major concern is that my faithful should not perform the deeds of the sodomists." (*Ibn Majah, Tirmidhi*).

2. The following tradition has also been reported by Haḍrat Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed, "When sodomy becomes popular among a certain people, God forsakes those people and God cares not if these people are killed in a forest." (*Tibrani*). This means that God turns indifferent

and has no use for such people.

3. A tradition is reported by Haḍrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Apostle of God (peace and blessings Allah be upon him) observed "Seven types of sinners are cursed by the angels of seven heavens." This curse is enough to send the wretch to utter damnation :

(1) "A sodomist is a cursed person." This the Prophet repeated three times.

(2) He who slaughters in the name of something else besides God, is a cursed one.

(3) The person who commits sexual intercourse with animals is a cursed one.

(4) The person who makes his wife and the mother of his wife his cohabiting partners at the same time (whether he joins the two together in wedlock or commits fornication with his mother-in-law), is a cursed one.

(5) An unfilial person is a cursed one.

(6) He who changes the sign-posts indicating the boundaries of the land is a cursed person.

(7) The servant who seeks alliance with someone else besides his patron is a cursed one. (*Tibrani, Baihaqi*).

4. Haḍrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) relates that the Apostle of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said : "One who indulges in sexual intercourse with the animals remains under the curse of God for all the twenty-four hours." (*Baihaqi, Tibrani*).

5. Haḍrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) relates that the Prophet of God (peace and

blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "May God curse him who removes signposts from the ground ; may God curse him who misguides a blind man; God's curse be on him who rebukes his parents ; God's curses be on him who attaches himself to someone else as a client leaving aside his owner and master. God's curses be on him who commits sodomy. The Prophet repeated this last sentence thrice." (*Baihaqi*).

6. Haḍrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) reports that the Holy Prophet observed concerning those who indulge in sexual intercourse with animals that the performer of this act and the object with which the act is performed, "Slay both." (*Abu Dawud*) Although the animal is not liable to be slaughtered, yet it has been ordained as a compulsory duty.

7. Haḍrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) relates that the Holy Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "The faith of these three persons is never acceptable : (1) The sodomist and the catamite; (2) Two women who maintain unnatural relationship with one another; (3) A tyrannical king." (*Tibrani*).

The implication is that the affirmation of Kalima : There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Prophet, by the above three persons will not save them from torment, save until they repent.

8. Haḍrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) reports a tradition that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "The Almighty Lord would not even look at a person who commits sodomy with a male person or performs a sodomist act with a woman." (*Tirmidhi*).

9. Haḍrat Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) relates a tradition that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "The sexual use of the anus of a woman is, in a way, sodomy." (*Ahmad, Bazzaz*).

10. Haḍrat 'Uqba b. 'Amir relates that the Prophet of God (peace and blesings of Allah be upon him) observed : "He who uses the anus of a woman for sexual act is a cursed one." (*Tibrani*).

11. Haḍrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) said : "He who performs an act of sodomy with a woman is an infidel." (*Tibrani*).

In other words such a man is a great transgressor, for despite having access to natural means, he uses unnatural means.

12. Haḍrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) relates this tradition also that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "He who copulates with a woman during menses or uses the anus of a woman for sexual act or affirms the claims of a kahin (soothsayer), that man negates the veracity of the Holy Qur'an. (*Tirmidhi, Nasa'i*).

13. According to a tradition reported by Haḍrat Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated: "Be ashamed before Almighty God. God is not ashamed of revealing the truth. It is unlawful to use the anus of a woman for an unnatural act." (*Dar Qutni*).

Punishment for Unequal Treatment with two Wives

Haḍrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with

him) relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "A person who has two wives and he does not treat them on an equal footing and refrains from dealing equitably and justly with both of them, on the Day of Doom the condition of this man will be such that half portion of his body will be in a state of paralysis. (*Tirmidhi*).

Three Persons Shall not Enter Paradise

Hadrat Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Three men shall never enter Paradise : one, who has no idea of self respect ; second, a drunkard ; third, a man who adopts the manner of women."[1]

Punishment in this World for Disobedience to Mother

Hadrat Abdullah b. Abi Aufa (may Allah be pleased with him) relates that a person named 'Alqama was very pious and observed prayers and fasts. At the hour of his death 'Alqama was unable to recite the creed in spite of prompting. His wife made a report

1. Some traditions refer to women instead of men in this case; which implies that as a man who apes woman shall not enter Paradise, likewise a woman who adopts the habit of men shall be deprived of Paradise.

The people submitted to the Prophet: O Messenger of God, we understand what you have told us about the drunkard, but, pray, tell us who is Dayyuth ? The Holy Prophet observed : He is that shameless fellow who cares not as to what sort of persons visit his wife. (*Tibrani*).

of this fact through a messenger to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The Holy Prophet enquired: "Are 'Alqama's parents alive?" The Prophet was informed that only 'Alqama's mother was alive and that she was estranged from him. The Holy Prophet sent a word to 'Alqama's mother : "I want to see you. Would you call on me or should I come to visit you ?" 'Alqama's mother sent a submission : "May the lives of my father and mother be sacrificed for you ! I do not want to cause inconvenience to you. I am coming to wait upon you." So the old woman came to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The Prophet enquired about 'Alqama from her. The old woman replied: " 'Alqama is a pious man ; but he always disobeys me and gives preference to his wife over me. Hence I am estranged from him." The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) told the old woman : "If you forgive his faults it would be better for him." But the woman refused to forgive her son. Upon this the Prophet ordered Hadrat Bilal to collect some wood and burn 'Alqama. On hearing this the old woman was frightened and enquired in a daze : "Will my child be burnt in fire?" The Holy Prophet replied, "Yes, our torment is lighter than the torment of the Almighty. I swear by God as long as you are angry with your son, neither his prayer nor his charity is acceptable to the Almighty." The old woman said : "Holy Prophet, you be my witness ! O people, be my witnesses! I forgive 'Alqama all his faults." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) addressed the people thus : "Look, has 'Alqama recited

the Kalima with his tongue or not ?" The people reported : "O Messenger of God, 'Alqama recited the creed with his own tongue and he died after having recited the creed of Allah." The Prophet ordered that 'Alqama's funeral be prepared ; his body should be bathed and shrouded. The Prophet himself accompanied the bier of 'Alqama and after his burial the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Whosoever among the Muhajirin (emigrants) and Ansar (helpers) disobeys his mother or causes her pain, he is cursed by the Almighty and by the angels and by all the people, God accepts neither his duties nor his prayers as long as he does not repent and does not treat his mother well, and does not make her happy as far as possible. Your mother's pleasure is a pre-requisite for God's pleasure on you and a mother's anger conceals the wrath of God." (*Tribrani*).

Punishment for Killing an Innocent Muslim

1. Hadrat Abu Sa'id (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the Messenger of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed : "Even if all the creatures of the heaven and earth join together in murdering an innocent Muslim, Almighty God shall throw them all into Hell with their faces down." (*Tibrani*).

2. Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) states that he heard the Prophet of God (peace and blesssings of Allah be upon him) as saying : "On Doomsday the murdered person shall hold his head in his hand and he will seize the front part of the hirt of the murderer in the other hand. Fresh blood

will be oozing out of the murdered man's veins. In this condition he will approach the Empyrean and will submit : "O God! This man murdered me." The Just Lord shall ordain the killing of the murderer and he shall be entered into Hell. (*Tirmidhi*).

The Punishment for him who Commits Suicide

1. Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) relates that the Apostle of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "He who kills himself will be awarded the same torment on the Day of Doom that he should continue to kill himself and he will kill himself in Hell in the same manner as he killed himself in the mortal world. Whosoever threw himself down from a mountain, he will continue to throw himself from the mountain in Hell also. Whosoever ended his life by taking poison will continue to drink poison; and whosoever took his life by means of a knife will continue to slaughter himself with a knife in Hell also." (*Bukhari, Muslim*).

The inference is that by whatever means a man committed suicide in the mortal world he will continue to use those means to kill himself in the Infernal world.

2. Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) also reports the tradition that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "He who strangled himself in the world, he will be strangled in Hell also and he who wounded himself in this world, the same wound shall be inflicted upon him in the infernal world." (*Bukhari*).

3. Hadrat Jabir (may Allah be pleased with

him) states that a wounded man committed suicide by piercing his throat with the point of an arrow. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) declined to offer funeral prayers for him. (*Ibn Hibban*).

4. Hadrat Jundub b. 'Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) relates the tradition that the Apostle of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated : A wounded man killed himself prematurely (*i.e.* before his actual end came). Upon this the Lord God ordained : "O My creature, you gave your life too soon. I have made your entry into Heaven unlawful." (*Bukhari*).

5. Hadrat Abu Qalaba (may Allah be pleased with him) relates a tradition originally reported by Thabit b. Dhahhak that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Whosoever swore by paganism is like the man who committed suicide". Severe torment awaits him on the Day of Doom. (It is customary with some people that despite their falsehood they claim, "I pray I may die as a Jew or a Christian or an unbeliever, if I am false." It is in respect of such people that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed that they would be treated as they said they should be treated). To vilify a Muslim is tantamount to committing an act of murder. To accuse a Muslim of being an unbeliever is tantamount to committing an act of murder. Whosoever kills himself with some implement in this world, he will be killed with the same implement on Doomsday." (*Bukhari*).

Punishment for a Tyrannical Ruler

1. Hadrat Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) relates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "On Doomsday his subjects will contend with a tyrannical ruler and will overcome him with argumentation and factual reasoning. After this the tyrant will be commanded : 'There is a corner lying vacant for you in Hell. Go and fill it'." (*Bazzaz*).

2. According to a tradition reported by Hadrat Abu Moosa (may Allah be pleased with him) the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "There is a jungle in Hell called 'Habb Habb' In this jungle the tyrannical magistrates will be tortured. Verily, it is in the power of the Almighty to torture every oppressor in this jungle."

3. Hadrat 'Aisha Siddiqa (may Allah be pleased with her) states that the Apostle of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) prayed for the punishment of an oppressive ruler while he was sitting in her apartment. The Holy Prophet observed : "O Lord, any person who is appointed a chief or governor over my people and he deals with the people in a tyrannical manner—Thou should torture such a tyrant in the next world." (*Muslim, Nasa'i*).

4. Hadrat Abu Awana (may Allah be pleased with him) reports the following words having been uttered by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) : "Curses of God be on the chief or governor who oppresses my people." (*Abu Dawud*).

Punishment for Him Who Takes Bribes

Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with

him) relates that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed : "The person who is appointed as governor or judge over a people—he will be produced on the Day of Doom in such a posture that his hand will be tied to his neck. Then if it is found that he was not corrupt and that all his decisions were based on justice he would be acquitted, but if he was corrupt and having taken bribes from the people gave judgements contrary to right principles, he will be cast into Hell, to the depths equal to a journey of five hundred years." (*Tibrani*).

Punishment for the Drunkards

1. According to a tradition reported by Hadrat Abu Umama (may Allah be pleased with him) the Holy Apostle (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Some people of this Ummah will pass their days and nights in drinking and debauchery. Then one morning such people will be transmuted into monkeys and swines. They will be sunk into the earth and stones shall be showered upon them from the sky. People will bring reports "Tonight such and such a locality sank underground. This night such and such a village sank in the earth." Stones shall be rained on these people as they were rained on the people of Lot. These people will be destroyed by windstorms as the nation of 'Aad were destroyed. The reasons for such havoc upon these people will be that these people will drink liquor and live on usury ; they will wear silken dresses. They will be surrounded by dancing girls and they will be utterly devoid of benevolence." (*Ahmad, Ibn Abi Dunya*).

All this implies that every kind of vice and sin will gain currency among them.

2. Hadrat Abu Huraira relates that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Whosoever commits adultery or drinks liquor, God deprives him of Faith in the same manner as if he were made to take off his clothes." (*Hakim*).

3. Hadrat Abu Musa (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed as follows : "Three persons cannot enter Paradise : one, a drunkard ; second, a person devoid of benevolence ; third, a man who practises magic. He who dies without penitence for having taken liquor will be given the waters of 'Ghota' to drink on the Day of Judgement." Someone enquired "What is Ghota?" The Holy Prophet observed: "Ghota is a stream in which the dirty blood from the genitals of the adulterers flows. The drunkards will emit such foul smell that even the denizens of Hell will be upset by it." (*Ahmad, Abu Yaala*).

Punishment for Forgetting the Holy Qur'an

Hadrat Sa'd b. Ubada (may Allah be pleased with him) reports the tradition that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) made the following observation : "The man who reads the Holy Qur'an and then through indifference or indolence forgets it, will meet with God as a leper." (*Mishkat*).

The man will be suffering from the disease of leprosy. The fingers of his hands will have disappeared through decomposition. Some eminent scholars have stated that the tradition implies that their teeth will

have been rooted out. (*Lama'at*). Apparently this latter interpretation seems more appropriate, for it is necessary to read Holy Qur'an again and again in order to remember it and the reading of the book is necessarily an action of the tongue and the teeth. Therefore, the removal of teeth as a punishment for forgetting the Holy Qur'an appears more likely. None but God knows better ! According to one tradition the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) made the following observation : "I was shown the sins that the people of my Ummah had committed and I saw no sin greater than that a person had learnt a surah or verse of the Qur an and then had forgotten it." (*Tirmidhi*)

Punishment for Breach of Promise

According to a tradition reported by Haḍrat Sa'id (may Allah be pleased with him) the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "On Doomsday a flag will be fixed in the anus of every 'ghadar' (a man guilty of the breach of promise)" (*Muslim*).

Punishment for Adulterers

The genitals of the adulterers will be stretched to the length of miles and then snakes and scorpions will be let loose upon them who will bite their genitals. They will cry out with intense thirst and will say, "Give us water to drink." Then they will be given to drink boiling pus and dirty blood taken from the genitals of evil women. In consequence of drinking this the intestines of the adulterers will be cut up into bits and these bits

will start coming out through their anuses. This torture will be worked upon them repeatedly for a long time. And the genitals of the adulteresses will be filled with red-hot coals.

This Ummah shall be Destroyed Because of Five Evils (Committed by It)

A tradition related by Haḍrat Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) says that the Holy Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "When the following five evils shall creep into my Ummah, it will then be destroyed :

(1) Cursing one another ;
(2) Use of liquor on a large scale ;
(3) Wearing of silken dresses ;
(4) Increased number of dancing girls and their frequent shows at large gatherings.
(5) When men shall engage in sexual intercourse with males and women shall engage in sexual acts with other females, *i.e.*, sodomy and homosexuality among females." (*Baihaqi*).

Miserable State of the Hypocrites

When the Muslims will have arrived on the bridge of Heaven, the hypocrites who will be enveloped in darkness will call out in piteous voices. "Brothers, stay a while so that guided by your light we may also step forward." The Muslims will say to them in reply : "Go back and get your light from where we got it." Hence when the hypocrites will turn back they shall find themselves in the depths of darkness and stillness. At last they shall come back much disturbed and feeling

very uneasy. They shall behold that a great wall has been erected on the edge of the Bridge of Heaven and the entrance has been barred. Hence they will cry out bitterly to the Muslims : "Were we not your companions in the moral world? So why do you leave us behind now?" They will reply, "You were with us, no doubt, but only superficially. In your hearts you harboured doubts about the faith and while wishing well to the infidels you wanted to do harm to us. Hence it is proper that you should go and join those whom you used to support and befriend." In the meanwhile the flames of fire will envelop them and drive them to the lowest depths of Hell. Those Muslims who will pass over the Bridge of Heaven with the speed of air or lightning they will say after crossing over to the Paradise : "We had heard that Hell lies on the way to Heaven, but we never beheld Hell." And those who shall cross over the Bridge in perfect safety will also join them in the Plain of Paradise. Those who harboured any grudge against one another will be joined in amity.

The Holy Prophet of God Will Unlock the Gate of Paradise

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) will unlock the Gate of Heaven with his own hands and will lead them into Paradise. Having entered Paradise the Prophet shall survey the condition of his Ummah. At that time the Prophet's Ummah will form one-fourth of the whole population of Paradise. After enquiring about the state of his Ummah the Prophet shall come to know that still thousands of

people of his Ummah are lying in Hell. This thought will make him sad ; and since the Prophet is the Benefactor of the two worlds, he feeling much anxious, will implore the Almighty : "O Lord ! free the people of my Ummah from Hell." The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) will keep his head bowed before the Almighty for seven days and will offer to Him thanksgiving and a variety of prayers. Upon this it will be ordained by the Lord Almighty, "He who has faith equal to a grain of oat in his heart, bring him out of the Hell." Following his example, the other Prophets will also intercede with the Almighty in favour of their people. By command of the Lord, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in company with the angels and his heavenly people will arrive at the edge of Hell and then the Prophet shall say to the people accompanying him : "Recall your relatives and acquaintances and tell their distinctive marks so that these angels may bring them out of the Hell." All this will be accomplished as desired. Besides the martyrs will be given the privilege of interceding in favour of seventy denizens of Hell, the Hafiz-i-Qur'an shall have the right to recommend ten denizens of Hell for salvation ; and the learned shall be given this right according to the degree of their eminence. When the Prophet will return to Paradise alongwith these people, at that time his Ummah will form one-third part of the population of Paradise. Then the Apostle of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) will enquire : "Now how many of my Ummah still remain in Hell?" He will be informed : "O Thou blessed Prophet, there

are still thousands of them lying in Hell." The Prophet will in the same manner as before implore God to do favour to his people still caught in Hell. Almighty God shall ordain : "He who has faith equal to the mustard-seed in his heart, bring him out of Hell." So once again in the same manner as before the Holy Prophet will arrive at the edge of Hell in the company of the learned, the sages and the martyrs and will say to them : "Recall and identify your relatives, acquaintances etc. and get them out of the Hell." This time also thousands of people will be released from Hell and they shall enter Paradise. Now the Ummah of the Holy Prophet will form half portion of the whole population of Heaven. After having obtained favour for these people the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) will make further enquiries and will again make petition to God to grant salvation to more people of his Ummah. Almighty Allah shall command : "Release from Hell anyone who has even half a bit of faith in his heart." Hence, as before, a large multitude of people will be released from Hell and admitted into Paradise. This time the people of the Holy Prophet's Ummah will be twice in number of the entire people of Heaven ; and none from among the believers in the Oneness of Allah shall remain in Hell. But those monotheists who had no access to the Messenger of God (peace be upon them) ; in other words, those who had no knowledge of the advent of the Apostle of God; the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) will intercede in favour of all the believers in one God. But the Lord God shall ordain : "You need have no concern in respect of them; I shall

grant them salvation on My Own." In the meanwhile there will be a contention between the infidels and the believers in One God. The unbelievers will say in a taunting manner : "You used to dispute with us over the Oneness of God and you claimed that you were in the right. But we now know that your notions were false. Look ! You and we are caught in the same dire distress" Hence at this moment the Lord God will ordain : "Do they regard belief in One God and infidelity as one and the same thing ? We swear by Our Might and Honour that We shall not treat any believer as the equal of an unbeliever." Hence the Lord God shall by His Omnipotence release these believers of One God from Hell at the end of a Day whose duration is equal to fifty thousand years. At that time the bodies of these believers of Allah will be burnt black like coals. Therefore, they will dive into the stream of the waters of life which flows by the gates of Paradise and they shall come out of it in such a condition that their bodies will be sound and fresh and after a period of time they shall enter Paradise ; but a dark spot will remain stamped on their necks and among the people of Heaven they shall be known by the epithet "the hellish persons." Hence after a period of time they shall represent to the court of the Almighty, "O Lord ! When you have released us from Hell, remove then this black spot and this epithet from us also." So by the Grace of God this black spot and the insignia will also be removed from them.

The last man to be released from Hell and admitted into Heaven will undergo the following process : He will be taken out of Hell and made to sit on its edge.

After some time when he will gain his senses he will say : "Turn my face from this side." He will be required to promise that he will not demand anything more than this. When the man shall have given firm assurance, his face will be turned from Hell. When he shall turn his gaze towards Paradise he will behold fresh and green trees. Therefore, he will raise shouts: "Lord, admit me to that place." He will see fine trees and beautiful houses and, contrary to his given promise, he will approach near the Paradise. When he shall behold the freshness of Paradise and its sparkling scene, he will, in contravention of all previous promises, in great impatience beseech the Lord to admit him into Heaven. When he shall be granted permission to enter Paradise he will be seized by the thought "The Heaven is filled to its capacity. Will there be any abode left for me ?" The Righteous Lord shall ordain : "Go, there is no scarcity of room in Paradise." The man will represent : "Lord, dost Thou joke with me, perhaps ? Whereas, verily, Thou art the Most Kind God." The Munificent Lord shall command : "Ask what is thou wish ! We shall grant you twice of that which you ask for." Hence, it shall be so. And such is the treatment of the lowliest person among the people of Heaven.

Conversation between the Inmates of Paradise and the Denizens of Hell

When all the people of Heaven shall have been settled in their abodes, they will meet with each other and say to one another : "Such and such a hellish man used to dispute with us over righteous matters. We know

not what condition is he in now ? Hence a window shall be thrown open and eyesight will be strengthened. That hellish person will cry bitterly, and ask for the viands and water of Paradise." The people of Heaven shall reply, "God has ordained all delights of Paradise unlawful for you. But tell us, did you find the promises of God true or not ? On our part we have found the promises of God valid and true in all respects, neither more nor less." That man will appear much ashamed and humble. Afterwards the people of Paradise will close the window.

Curses on the Chiefs

God commanded is Surah Saba' : "Would that ye be present at the time when the tyrants shall be produced before their Creator and will be throwing their blame on others. Such people who were considered lowly in the mortal world will say to those who were considered lofty personages in the world, "But for you, we would certainly have been pious men." Upon hearing this these lofty personages will say to the lowly persons : "Did we prevent you from following the path of righteousness when it was shown unto you ? You are yourself to blame for depriving yourself of the opportunity of following the path of righteousness." The lowly persons will say in reply to the lofty ones : "It were your deceptive tricks and false stratagems that you practised day in and day out which led us astray. It was by these deceptive tricks and false stratagems that you ordered us to disbelieve in the Just Lord and associate false gods with Him." These verses reveal the discussion that will take place in the presence of

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the Almighty on the Day of Judgement between the leaders of false causes, chiefs of the infidels and those who associated false gods with the Supreme Lord on the one hand and their followers on the other.

The lowly persons will say : "Oh ! Our leaders ! it were you who ruined us and made us disobedient to the Mighty Lord." The leaders will say, "When did it happen that we forced you to infidelity and to associate false gods with the Almighty and when was it that we prevented you physically from following the right path. You turned infidels of your own accord. You are sinners yourself." The lowly people will reply, "You did not compel us physically, but your deceits and false stratagems prevented us from recognising the right cause and from following the path shown by the Holy Apostles of God."

God affirmed in Surah Safat: And turning to one another they shall start arguing with one another. The subject people will say to their leaders : "Your visits to us were impressive and overwhelming." The leaders will reply, "You yourselves did not repose faith in the Almighty. We had no power over you. You disobeyed the commands of Allah of your own will. Hence Lord's words have come true for us and we have all to suffer torments. If we led you astray, we were ourselves following the evil course."

The lowly and the common people will blame their ring-leaders for running them and will say to them "You used to come to us with great pomp and show and forced us through your speeches and writings to desist from righteous causes and you induced us to follow evil." The leaders will reply, "What power did

we have to prevent you from accepting faith in the Almighty ? You yourself exceeded the bounds of reason and justice and did not accept the word of the selfless and sincere advisers. You rather fell into our trap. Had you followed the rules of commonsense and farsightedness you would not have listened to us—rather you would have turned all your attention to the teachings of the true Prophets and Apostles of God. We were ourselves a misguided people. What else can you expect from a misguided person except that he will lead you astray? Nothing can save us now. We and you must suffer torment.

Further the Lord observed :

"Hence this day they shall all jointly suffer torments. We punish all sinners so. In the mortal world when they were told 'God is the Greatest', they adopted a haughty attitude and said : "Shall we leave our own deities at the bidding of an insane poet."

Leaders or commoners—whosoever refused to believe that 'God is the Greatest' and considered it beneath his dignity to have faith in the worship of one God ; and whosoever refused to believe in the ministry of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and called him a poet and an insane person—all these people will suffer torture. It shall not be that only the misguiding leaders will be put to torture, the commoners who followed them will also share the same suffering.

Disgust of the Leaders

God has observed in Surah Baqarah: "Those whose

biddings were followed by others, when they will clearly show their disgust towards their followers and when all have seen the tortures, the relationship between the leaders and the led will be broken."

On Doomsday the misguided leaders and chiefs of the infidels will express disgust with their followers and they shall neither come to their aid, nor, in fact, they will be in a position to help them. At this critical moment the indignation which the followers will feel towards their leaders whose false and evil plans and resolutions they had supported in the mortal world, can be well imagined.

Further on from this verse describing the shame and distraction of the common people the Magnificent Lord affirms : "The common people who followed these misguided leaders will say "Let us go back into the mortal world only once and we shall dissociate ourselves from these leaders as they have clearly deserted us now. But they shall never be released from Hell." The Holy Qur'an has clearly revealed the happenings that will take place on the Plain of Doom. Sympathy and help are of no avail. They are unfortunate who pay no heed to the call of this Book and who draw no lessons from its holy verses.

DESCRIPTION OF HELL

In the Name of the Lord the Beneficent and the Merciful. We laud Him and shower blessings on His Messenger, the Gracious.

Hereafter have been described in plain language the circumstances of Hell which have been gleaned from the verses of the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

The principal reason why this compilation has been made is that though the Muslims often mention Hell in conversation yet they know not how and by what means they can attain salvation from it because they, indeed, are ignorant of the fearful torments and hardships which are in store for the denizens of Hell.

I trust that those Muslims, who will go through this book carefully and reposing faith in the veracity of the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), will reflect upon the circumstances of Hell, they shall find it easier

to abstain from indulging in sin and what's more, their own lust will not prove a great hinderance in the performance of virtuous deeds.

May it be the Will of God that this work, like other religious books, should help the Muslims to turn to religion and piety and may this book find increasing favour among the faithful. I appeal to the readers that they should remember the humble Khawaja Muhammad Islam in their prayers.

Depth of Hell

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Musa Ash'ari (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), describing the depth of Hell, remarked : If a stone is thrown into Hell, it will take seventy years to reach its bottom.

It is narrated on the authority of Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) that they were sitting in the blessed company of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) when they heard something falling. The Apostle of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "Do you know what it is ?" We (the companions) respectfully replied : "Allah and his Apostle know best." The Prophet observed : "It is the noise produced by a stone that was dropped by Allah into Hell some seventy years before, and it has touched the ground now."

Walls of Hell

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed that Hell has been encircled

by four walls, and the breadth of each wall covers a period of forty years—that is to say, each wall is so wide that it requires forty years' continuous walking to cover its breadth.

Gates of Hell

The Holy Qur'an has observed about the gates of Hell. "And verily Hell is the promised place for them all. It has seven gates, and each gate has a separate portion for each one of them." (*Surah Hijar*). The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has himself observed: "Hell has seven doors, and one of them has been reserved for those who draw a sword against my followers."

Darkness and Fire of Hell

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated: "Hell had been inflamed continuously for one thousand years. Consequently, its fire became red. Again, it had been burnt for one thousand years and its red colour became white. Still again it had been kindled for one thousand years, and its white-coloured flames turned into black. So, the existing colour of the fire of Hell is black—as black as a dark night." Another authority states that the flames of Hell do not illuminate, it always remains dark. An authentic narrative from 'Sahih Bukhari' and 'Sahih Muslim' report that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "This worldly fire is the seventieth part of the Fire of Hell." His companions (may Allah be pleased with them) said : "It is enough to reduce (a sinner) to ashes." The

Apostle of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : "If you add sixty-nine degrees to the worldly fire, it equals the Fire of Hell." Another narration reveals that if the denizens of Hell lie on the worldly fire, they will enjoy sound sleep, because it (worldly fire) is much cooler than the Fire of Hell.

An Estimate of the Torments in Hell

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said : "The lightest punishment would be inflicted on that sinner whose boots and straps would be filled with fire ; and it will cause his mind to boil miserably. He will take this punishment for the severest, whereas it is the very first stage of the hellish tortures."

Levels of Hell—Bodies of the Denizens of Hell and their Diet

The fire of Hell is seventy degrees hotter than the worldly fire. As it has already been mentioned in its initial stages its colour was red, then white and now it is black. It has seven levels, and each level has a big entrance. The first level of Hell is reserved for those Muslim sinners and idolaters who were polytheists but simultaneously supported Prophets. The remaining six levels of Hell have been earmarked for the polytheists, worshippers of fire, atheists, Jews, Christians and hypocrites respectively. These levels of Hell are known as (1) *Jaheem*, (2) *Jahannam*, (3) *Sa'ir*, (4) *Saqar*, (5) *Nata*, (6) *Haviya* and (7) *Hutama*. Every one of these extensive levels is replete with incalculable pains, tortures and torments, and multifarious houses.

For instance, there is a house called "Ghayy", the severity of its torments is such that the denizens of other six levels pray four hundred times daily for salvation from its tortures. There is another house, known as "Zamharir", it is the region of extreme cold. There is still another house *Jubb-ul-Huzan, i.e.* well of griefs, wherein is a well called *Tinatul Khabal*—mire of pus and poison. There is a towering mountain, known as *Sa'ud* its space equals to seventy years' walking. Idolaters would be thrown into the Fire of Hell from its peak. There is a pond, *Aab-i-Hamim*, with so hot water that the moment a sinner drinks it, his upper lip swells to such an extent that it covers his nose and eyes ; the lower, his chest. At this water passes down the throat, his tongue burns ; mouth contracts and ultimately this boiling water tears apart the human lungs, stomach and intestines. There is another tank *Ghassaq* wherein gathers the idolaters' pus, sweat and blood. Another fountain, *Ghisleen* serves the same purpose. Likewise, there are countless tormenting scenes in Hell. The size of the sinners' bodies would be stretched and broadened so as to magnify their sufferings and various types of tortures shall be inflicted on the exterior as well as the internal parts of each fibre and limb of their bodies. Burning, crushing, biting by poisonous snakes and scorpions, piercing with thorns, slashing of skin—these are the manifold modes of punishment in Hell. Due to the excess of heat and warmth in Hell, bodies of the sinners would melt : will be reborn and melt again. This process would be repeated for seven hundred times in the duration of a moment. But this point should not be ignored that

the shape of the original limbs of their bodies would not undergo any change ; flesh and skin would repeatedly be tortured. Skin of some infidels is said to be forty-two yards thick ; their teeth would resemble towering mountains, and their sitting would cover an unlimited space. After a long time, the pangs of hunger would be increased to such extremity that it will surpass all other torments. At last, the sinners would become terribly restless and demand food to satisfy their appetite. They would be given to eat *Zaqqum*, a thorny plant, which would get stuck in their throats. They would cry for water, as they used to do in the world when a morsel of food gets stuck in their throats. It shall be ordained that water be provided to them from *Jahim*, the very first level of Hell. It would cause their lips to swell, tongue to dwindle, throat to break into pieces, and their intestines will be torn apart and excreted through their anuses. So, being in dire distress they will supplicate to the Lord of Hell for death, so that their punishment may come to an end. After a thousand years he will say : "You will always remain in Hell." After a thousand years they will pray to God : "Deprive us of our lives, but have mercy and relieve us of this intolerable torment." After one thousand years the Lord shall ordain : "Hold your tongue, and do not beg My pardon ; you have been condemned for ever." At last perforce they will say to one another : "Let us endure, for endurance may bear good fruit." They will continuously pray to the Almighty for one thousand years with extreme lamentation and entreaty, but all in vain. Ultimately when all hope is lost they will say

to one another, restlessness or patience are one and the same for us. For us there is no means of salvation. They would be turned upside down. The shape of their bodies would be distorted and they would assume the form of dogs, donkeys, monkeys, wolves, snakes and other beasts and animals. Those who are proud of their worldly pelf and power, would be trampled on the Day of Resurrection. Such is the description of the condition of the infidels on that Day.

Rage and Fury of Hell, Screaming and Calling out to Denizens of Hell, and their Confinement in Narrow Cells

> "And those who deny the existence of the Lord shall be tormented in Hell and this is such a terrific place that the people thrown into it will hear a roaring voice and Hell shall be raging with such intensity that it would appear to be bursting with Fury" (*Surah Mulk*, Part 29).

Muhammad Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi writes in *Bayan-ul-Qur'an* that God will either grant Hell perception and wrath and it will expend its fury on the deniers of truth, or the aim is to explain the conception of Hell with an example that Hell would thus display its feeling of anger. The moment Hell beholds the sinners even from afar it would yell furiously, and when they are shackled and committed to one of its narrow cells they would bitterly yearn for death. (*Furqan*).

> "Hell will yet be a hundred years away from the hellish persons when Hell shall behold them and they shall behold Hell. Upon seeing them Hell will start convulsing with fury

and yelling with intense rage. The hellish people will bear all this and when finally they shall be thrust into it they will yearn for Death just as in the mortal world, they used to say in times of distress".[1]

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn Abi Hatim that the Holy Propht (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed that Hell had two eyes by reciting verse راتهم اذا. (*Ibn Kathir*).

Although Hell is a spacious place yet the sinners would be kept in small, narrow cell. Some of the narration on the authority of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) reveal that the sinners would be thrust into Hell as nails are hammered into a wall. (*Ibn Kathir*).

"Hell shall call forth such a man who had turned his back on truth in the mortal world and had cared not for obedience and had gathered wealth but had been reluctant to spend it and had concealed it." (*Surah Ma'arij*).

Ibn Kathir reveals from the plain of Resurrection that Hell would pick up the sinners as a bird picks up grain. This verse refers to the hoarders of wealth. Hadrat Qatada (may Allah be pleased with him) interpreted this verse as follows : "The person mentioned in the verse is one who, in spite of God's directives, does not spend wealth and overlooks the sense of right and wrong in its acccumulation." Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Hakim felt so afraid on account of this verse that

1. So many other authorities also make it evident that sagacity would be bestowed upon Hell and Heaven.

he never closed the strings of his purse and kept spending his wealth in the name of God. Hadrat Hasan Basri used to say: "O Man ! being aware of the Divine threat, yet you amass riches ?" The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Man, on the Doomsday, will suffer bitter shame as he stands before God in abject humility like a call of goat." The Almighty would address to such niggards : "Did I not bestow upon you animals, slaves, servants and other blessings ? And what did you do in return ?" Thereupon he would say: "I accumulated and added to them, and thus left behind me more than I was granted. Now, permit me to fetch all of them." The inference to be drawn is that man would not have sent any provisions in the form of good deeds to help him in the next world. Hence he shall be thrust into Hell. (*Tirmidhi*). It has also been observed that this world is the home of that person who does not have any home ; it is the wealth of that person who does not have wealth, and only he amasses wealth for the world who has no wisdom (*Mishkat*). Baihaqi in *Shu'ab-al-Iman*, has copied a tradition which states that when a person passes away, angels remark, "What provision has he sent ahead for the life hereafter", but the people say : "What has he left behind in this world ?"

Snakes and Scorpions of Hell

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated : "Verily, there are many long-necked snakes in Hell. If one of them bites a sinner he will suffer its pain for forty years." (So great is the

poisonous effect of its venom). The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) further stated: "Verily, there are many scorpions in Hell like saddled mules in Hell. If one of them bites a denizen of Hell, he will continue to suffer its pain for forty years." (Such is the poisonous nature of its venom). (*Ahmad*).

The Holy Qur'an states : "We shall heap ever-increasing torments upon them in recompense for the mischiefs that they used to commit)."

Hadrat Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) while interpreting this verse stated : "Apart from the usual torment of fire, another torture shall be added: Scorpions shall be set over them whose big teeth will be equal in size.

Food and Drink for the Denizens of Hell ; Zari' or the Thorns of Fire

Nothing except the boiling water of a tank and dry weeds would be given to them as food, which would neither nourish them nor satiate them. The author of *Miraqat* writes that Zari' is a thorny tree in Hijaz. It has such evil properties that even the animals and beasts do not come near it. If the animals take it, they will die immediately. Furtheron he states that Zari' stands for the thorn of fire. These thorns would be more bitter than aloe more foul in smell than a stinking corpse and hotter than fire. Even if the sinners take enormous quantities of these thorns they will not satiate their appetite.

'Ghisleen' Effacement of Wounds

"This day he has no friend nor has he anything to

eat except the effacement of wounds, which diet is specified for those who are sinful." (*Haqqa*).

Zaqqum—Thorny Plant (Muscus)

"Without doubt the food for the sinners is the Zaqqum tree which is like liquid tin and which will boil in the stomach like hot water. So those who deny and are misguided! You will eat the trees of Zaqqum and fill your bellies with it and then you shall drink boiling water in the manner of thirsty camels. Such hospitality will be shown to them on the Day of Doom" (*Surah Waqia'*).

In fact Zaqqum is a tree which sprouts from the roots of Hell and its fruit resembles the expended hood of snakes. 'Zaqqum' is translated as 'seend,' which is a well-known tree and has a bitter taste. But this has been stated only to serve as an illustration, for everything in Hell will be worse in bitterness and evil smell than the things of this world. And what a ghastly sight it would be when they shall eat this tree and drink boiling water.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated : "If only one drop of Zaqqum is caused to spill into the world it will spoil the food of the entire world (*i.e.* all types of foods will become extremely bitter). Imagine then the condition of those whose diet will be nothing but Zaqqum."

(*Tirmidhi and Ibn Hibban*).

A tradition related by Hakim is as follows : "I swear in the name of the Almighty that if even one drop of Zaqqum should fall in the rivers of this world, it would certainly turn the food of the entire world

bitter in taste. Imagine then the condition of that person whose food will be nothing else but Zaqqum." (*Targhib*)

Ghassaq

"They shall not taste anything cool or drink anything else except boiling water and 'Zaqqum'." (*Surah Naba'a*).

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "If one bucket of Ghassaq is poured over the world, the whole world would be upset by its foul smell." What is Ghassaq?——eminent religious figures of Ummah have defined it in various manners :

The author of *Mirqat* has copied four statements :

(1) It denotes the sinners' pus and filth;

(2) It stands for the sinners' tears;

(3) It points to Zamhirir, *i.e.* the torment of Hell in which the tormented person will be freezed;

(4) It is a cold rotten pus and it will be so frozen that the sinners will be unable to drink it (but they shall perforce drink it to satiate their hunger). In any case Ghassaq is a very foul thing.

Kate (The Dreg of Oil)

"And when they shall cry out of thirst, they would be given water that will be like the dreg of oil to drink and it will burn their faces. What an evil water it would be and what a terrible place the Hell indeed is". (*Surah Kahf*).

Water of Pus

"This person (the denizen of Hell) will be directed to drink water of pus. He will drink it draught by draught. He will get it down through his throat with great suffering and thus it would appear as if death was approaching him from all sides ; yet he will not die. (*Ibrahim*). The inference is that while passing through many sufferings it would appear to the person that death was imminent yet there will be no death to wash out his sins and release him from everlasting punishment.

Boiling Water

"And the denizens of Hell shall be given to drink boiling water which will cut their intestines into pieces." (*Surah Muhammad*).

Ta'am Dhi Ghussa (Throat Gripping Food)

Surah Muzammil reveals: "Verily, We have appointed for the denizens of Hell, heaps of fire, food that will choke their throats and dire punishment."

Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said : "Ta'am Dhi Ghussa is a sharp thorn that will get stuck in the throat ; it will neither pass down the throat nor will it come out." (*Targhib*).

It is narrated on the authority of Hadrat Abu Darda (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "The denizens of Hell will suffer from such severe pangs of hunger that this torment of hunger alone will be equal to all torments of Hell that they would be suffering already." Thereupon they would be given Zari'-food' which neither nourishes them nor

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alleviates their hunger. Hence, they will entreat for food, and get 'ta'am dhi ghussa' *i.e.* throat gripping food. When they are hard put as to how to get this food down their throats, they will recall, that they used to wash down the choking food by drinking liquids. Hence they will ask for something to drink. Boiling water would be given to them in iron goblets. Approaching near these goblets will seriously burn their faces. When this boiling water goes down into their bellies, it will tear up all the internal organs (*i.e.* intestines etc.). (*Mishkat*).

It is narrated on the authority of Hadrat Abu Umama (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) after reciting the verse observed that when the denizen of Hell will lift the liquid pus to his lips he will recoil ; when it approaches nearer, it will burn his face and the skin of his head will peel off. Thereafter when he drinks it, the liquid will tear off his intestines which will excrete through his anus. Later the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) recited these verses :

Various Forms of Torment

Fire of Hell and its intolerable heat, snakes, scorpions, wretched food, darkness—these are the various forms of tortures in Hell. But all is a minor part of hellish torment. The Holy Qur'an and Hadith reveal that besides these forms of punishment, there are also many other ways. Some of them are listed as under :

Boiling Water would be Poured Over Head

"Hot water will be poured over their heads and its

heat will dissolve the skin and all the interior organs of their bellies, and all this pulp will excrete." (*Surah Hajj*). The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated : "Verily, boiling water would be poured over the heads of the denizens of Hell and it will cut and bring out all that is in their bellies, and at last it would melt through their feet. Hereafter, the sinners would again be transformed into their original shape." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) further observed that the word in this verse bears exactly this meaning. (*Tirmidhi, Baihaqi*).

Mace

According to *Surah Hajj*, the denizens of Hell would be punished with the iron mace ; and whenever they try to come out from the suffocation of Hell, they would again be pushed into it, and told 'Go on suffering the torments' (*Surah Hajj*).

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "If a mace of Hell is placed on the earth, even all the human beings and jinn together cannot lift it." It is stated in another tradition that if a mountain is struck with the iron mace of Hell, the whole mountain will break into bits of ashes. (*Targhib*).

Skin would be Turned Over

Surah Nisa' reveals :

> "When once their skin has been burnt, we shall form a fresh layer of skin upon their bodies so that they may continue to suffer the same torture over and over again."

Hadrat Hasan Basri (may Allah be pleased with

him) narrates : "The denizens of Hell will be burnt daily for seventy thousand times. Every time, after having been burnt, they would be restored to life. Thus, this process will continue." (*Targhib-o-Tarhib*).

Drunkard's Doom

Hadrat Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) holds: A person came from Yeman and wished to know the (Divine) orders about the wine that used to be drunk in his country. This wine, known as 'mazar' was extracted from barley. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : "Does this (wine) cause intoxication ?" He replied in the affirmative. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : "Every intoxication is prohibited. God has declared that whosoever uses intoxicants, would be given by the Lord 'Tinyatul Khabal' to drink." The companions submitted: "O Prophet what is 'Tinyatul Khabal' ?" The Holy Prophet replied : "It is the sweat, pus and dirty blood of the denizens of Hell." (*Muslim*).

Paradise has been Denied to Three Persons

It is narrated on the authority of Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Paradise has been denied to three persons, *i.e.* one, who has always been drinking ; second, he who disobeys his parents ; and thirdly, a shameless person who persuades the members of his own family to indulge in evil deeds, *i.e.* fornication." (*Ahmad*).

End of the Haughty People

It is narrated on the authority of the father and

the grand-father of 'Umar bin Shu'aib (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated : "On Doomsday, all the haughty people would be gathered like men, but the size of their bodies would be small like tiny ants, that is to say, their appearance would be like ants. They will be sunk in abject disgrace. They will be driven towards a prison of Hell, called 'bolus'. A fire of the maximum intensity shall rage over them and they will be given to drink the excretions of the denizens of Hell *i.e.*, blood, pus, black and dirty ichor of the wounds which is known as 'Tinyatul Khabal." (*Tirmidhi*).

Two Categories of the Denizens of Hell

It is narrated on the authority of Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "There are two categories of the denizens of Hell, which I would not see. One, those people who will hold lashes like the tails of the cows and with these they will strike at people. Secondly, such women who appear clad but, in reality, are naked (*i.e.* the women who wear transparent dress) and seductive women (*i.e.* those who embellish their bodies and are coquettish). They will knot their hair in a raised fashion and their head will appear like the hump of a Najd camel. These women shall not enter Paradise and fragrance of Paradise can be smelt from a very great distance indeed." (*Muslim*).

Tragic End of the Consumers of Usury

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be

upon him) has stated : "On the night of my visit to Heaven I happened to see the people of a race whose bellies were as big as pitchers filled with snakes—snakes that could be seen even from outside. I asked Gabriel who they were." "They are those who consume usury," said Gabriel." (*Ahmad Ibn Majah*).

Saud (A Mountain of Fire)

The Holy Qur'an reveals : "We will cause them (the sinners) to mount the 'Saud', which is a mountain of fire in Hell." The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated : "Saud is a mountain of fire. The denizen of Hell would be mounted on it in the span of seventy years, and likewise would be dropped from its peak in the span of seventy years, *i.e.*, he will take seventy years to reach its peak and seventy years to come down ; and it will continue to happen so—for ever and ever." (*Tirmidhi*).

Silsilah (A Very Long Chain)

The Holy Qur'an reveals : Angels would be ordered (by God) to chain the sinner, to yoke him, to throw him into Hell and then to tie around him a chain seventy yards in length. Maulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanwi writes in *Biyan-ul-Qur'an* that the length of this yard is known only to God, because it is a Divine yard. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) declared : "If a piece of 'Rang' is dropped from the sky to the earth, it will touch ground before night fall and the distance between the sky and the earth is of 500 years duration. And if that piece is passed from one end of the chain worn by the denizens

of Hell to the other end of the chain, it will require forty years to cover this span. It is evident from the above that the chains with which the denizens of Hell will be bound will be longer than the distance between the sky and the earth." Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "The chains would be pierced into the body of the sinners through the anus, and will be taken out at the other end. Then the body of the sinner will be roasted on fire as 'kabab' is grilled on skillets or as the locust is roasted in oil." (*Ibn Kathir*)

Tauq (Yoke)

God has warned (the sinners) in *Surah Dahr* "We have for infidels chains, yoke and burning fire."

Surah Mo'min declares : "They (the sinners) will soon come to know when the yoke is put around their necks. They would be dragged towards the boiling water and then to fire."

Ibn Abi Hatim has narrated directly from the Holy Prophet that (on Doomsday) there would rise a dark cloud before the sinners. Then they would be asked their desire. They would wish the cloud to shower, and it would cause to rain yoke, chains and burning flames. They would encircle the hellish people, burn them and add to their (already existing) yokes and chains. Hadrat Qatada (may Allah be pleased with him) said : "When the sinners are caught by their hair and dipped into the boiling water, it would melt down their flesh and consequently nothing will remain except their bony skeletons and two eyes."

Clothes of Sulphur

Surah Ibrahim affirms : "Shirts (*i.e.* tunics) of the

sinners would be of sulphur and fire would cling to their faces." Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi writes that the oil of the pine tree has been named 'Qatran', which has been translated as 'sulphur'. Their shirts (*i.e.* tunics) imply that 'Qatran' would stick to their bodies so that it may catch the fire immediately (*Bayan-ul-Qur'an*).

Haḍrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said : "Qatran means liquid tin. The clothes of the denizens of Hell would be made of this tin and these clothes would be hot as burning fire." (*Ibn Kathir*).

'*Muslim Sharif*' points out that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "If a woman, who mourns over a dead body, does not beg pardon before her death, she would be restored to life on the Doomsday in a shirt drenched in Qatran (liquid or sulphur) and one covering would be made of itch and Qatran would be wrapped over their bodies."

Surah Hajj reveals : "And hence those who were infidels, their clothes would be clipped out of fire."

Taunts of the Sentinels of Hell

Besides every physical and mental torture meted out to the sinners, they would also be taunted by the sentinels of Hell. Punishment of this sort has been interpreted in the Holy Qur'an by various titles. *Surah Sajadah* in Part 21 reveals : "And they will be told : Endure now the torments of fire which you denied (in the world)."

Deformity of the Denizens of Hell

Surah Yunus reveals : "And those who committed

evil deeds, would be punished according to the nature of their evildeeds. They would be humiliated. None could defend them against the Divine torment. The ugliness of their faces would be such as if layers upon layers of the darkness of the night had enveloped them." This verse of the Holy Qur'an reveals that the faces of the denizens of Hell would be extremely dark and black.

A hadith reveals that Haḍrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said : "If anyone of the denizens of Hell is sent to the world, (living) people are sure to die because of his odious face and bad smell." After that Haḍrat 'Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him) wept bitterly.

Surah Mo'minun points out : "Their (sinner's) ugly faces would be burning in fire."

The Prophet, interpreting Kalihoon observed : "An infidel would burn in the fire of Hell. Consequently, his upper lip would dwindle and touch the middle of his head. Likewise, his lower lip would dangle to such an extent as to touch his navel." (*Tirmidhi*).

Tears of Denizens of Hell

It is narrated on the authority of Haḍrat Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "O, Men! You should weep; and if you do not weep, try to weep because the people in Hell would shed tears so much that their tears would mark drains on their faces. When their tears come to an end, blood would begin to flow from their eyes, causing deep injury to them. In short there will be such an abundance of

blood and tears that if boats were to be set on them they would begin to sail." (*Sharah Sunnah*).

Tongue of the Denizens of Hell

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Verily, the sinner would stretch out his tongue to the length of three kos and even six kos.[1] The people will trample on his tongue and step on it." (*Tirmidhi*).

Bodies of the Denizens of Hell

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "In Hell, the part between the shoulders of an infidel would be equal to a distance of three days' journey, by a horse-rider. His jaw-tooth would be as big as the mountain of Uhud and the thickness of his skin would come up to a distance which can be covered in three days."

One of the ahadith of *Tirmidhi* tells that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated: "The jaw-tooth of an idolater would be at level with the mountain of Uhud and that his thigh as big as the mountain of Baida. His sitting place in Hell would cover a space which can be traversed in three days equal to the distance between Holy Medina and the village of Zubdah." (*Mishkat*).

There is in Mishkat another narration which points out that in Hell the sitting place of an infidel

1. 'Kos' is a measure of length about three English miles, which gives an indication of the length to which the tongue of the denizen of Hell will stretch.

would be as long as the distance between Mecca and Medina.

Some of the ahadith reveal that the thickness of skin of an infidel would be equal to the length of forty-two hands. Another narration from *Muslim Sharif* states that this length would be equal to the journey of three days. All this is not difficult to understand, because torture would vary from sinner to sinner, according to the nature of his sins.

Some of the ahadith reveal that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Some of my followers would be in Hell so tall and big a single man will occupy the entire space in a corner of Hell." (*Targhib and Tarhib*).

It is narrated on the authority of Hadrat Mujahid (may Allah be pleased with him) that Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said : "Do you know the width of Hell?" I replied in the negative. He said : "Yes, by God! verily there would be a distance of seventy years between the shoulder and the ear-lobe of a sinner, and therein would be running the streams of pus and blood." (*Targhib*).

State of the Sinners' Entrance (Into Hell)

The Holy Qur'an reveals at various places the state of the sinners' entrance into Hell. There are verses that indicate that they would be thirsty while they are thrown into Hell, and the angels would ask them at the door of Hell many questions before they step in. The following verses also throw light on these points :

"Sinners would be thirsty before they are pushed

towards Hell." (*Surah Maryam*).

"And the Day when the sinners are drawn headlong towards Hell, they would be asked to endure the fire of Hell." (*Surah Qamar*).

"And then the sinners and the misguided and the multitude of the followers of Satan—all of them would be thrown into Hell headlong." (*Surah Shu'ara'*).

"Culprits would be known by their appearance and features (because their faces would be dark and the colour of their eyes will be blue. Then, their hair and feet would be caught (and they would be dragged along into Hell)."

(*Surah Rahman*).

It is recorded in *Targhib and Tarhib* that Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) said that the feet and hands of a sinner would be twisted and joined together, and then after breaking them like wood, they would be thrown into Hell.

Angels would be directed to gather the oppressors and their accomplices and their idols (whom they used to worship) and show them the way to Hell. Then the angels would be directed to stop them a while. They (sinners) would be asked : "Now, why do you not help each other (as you used to do in the world)? They will stand with downcast heads and will not help each other. On the Day, when their faces would be inverted in Hell, they would repent for not obeying God and His Apostle (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)." (*Surah Ahzab*).

Satan's Address to the Denizens of Hell

The sinners would repent on the one hand, of

their evil doing, and, on the other, they would be rebuked by Satan. *Surah Ibrahim* supports this fact : And (on Doomsday), when the sinners' cases have been settled, Satan will say : "It is of no avail to curse me now, for God's promises were indeed true. I believed those promises and misled you, because I could not do more than this ; and you followed me. You should curse yourself rather than me. Neither you are my protector nor I am yours. I am myself disgusted of your doing, because (in the world) you used to make me a partner of God. Surely, there is a dire punishment for the oppressors."

The denizens of Hell would bitterly regret when Satan disclaims all responsibility for their sins and refuses to afford any kind of support, aid or consolation to them. At this moment the intensity of their anger and fury upon Satan can be clearly imagined.

Sinners' Fury on those Who led them Astray

Sinners would display their rage upon those who misguided them. They will say (to such people) : "We were obliged to you, therefore, can you emancipate us from this torment?" They would say : "We ourselves are the victims. Had the Lord God told us any way to escape from this torture, we would have showed that way to you. All of us are sailing in the same boat. Whether we suffer the tortures with pain or endure the suffering calmly, the fact remains that we have no way of salvation from this torture." (*Surah Ibrahim*).

Surah Hamim Sajdah reveals that out of fury and rage sinners will say to God about those who misled them : "O our Creator, show us the Devil and those

who led us astray; we will crush them under feet so that they may be humiliated."

Sinners' Supplication to the Lord and the Sentinels of Hell

Being severely tortured the denizens of Hell would supplicate to the sentinels of Hell : "Pray to God for our relief (at least) for one day."

They will say: "Did Prophets not bring you miracles and tell you the path to shun Hell?"—(*Surah Mo'min*) Thereupon the hellish people would reply in the affirmative. Moreover, they will also confess their disobedience. Angels would say : "We cannot pray (to God) for your relief. You should yourself pray (and that too will be futile). Sinners' prayers will be of no avail in the life hereafter." (*Surah Mo'min*).

Sinners would, then, have recourse to the supervisors of Hell, and plead for mercy : "O lords ! you pray to Providence to send death upon us and put an end to our sufferings." They will say in reply : "You will always remain here in this very condition (*i.e.*, neither will you die no escape)."

Hadrat A'mash (may Allah be pleased with him) said : "According to a tradition handed down to me there will be a period of one thousand years between the sinners' supplication and God's response."

Hereafter the sinners would think of a direct supplication to God, because He is the Greatest of all. They will implore : "O our Lord ! Misfortune had enveloped us; we were a misguided people. O our God ! relieve us of this torture now ; if we repeat (our evil doings) we are indeed to account for it." The

Almighty will respond, "Welter in your cursed state and do not address Me."

Hadrat Abu Darda (may Allah be pleased with him) said : "Hearing so from the Almighty, they (sinners) would lose all hope of salvation. Then, they would begin to lament and pray like asses"—*Mishkat.*

Ibn Kathir writes : "Their faces would change and invert until some of the pious men would arrive carrying God's commands for their forgiveness, but they would not recognize any of the sinners." The denizens of Hell would tell them : "I am such and such", but they will say "You are telling lies. We do not recognize you." At last the doors of Hell will be shut (for ever) and the sinners would continue to decay therein.

Sinners' Screaming

The Almighty God, in *Surah Hud*, observes : Those who are wretched would live in Hell in such a state as donkeys crying continuously.

Some Prayers to Shun Hell

(1) Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) taught the following prayers to his followers. He taught them the Qur'anic Surahs: O Allah ! I seek refuge with Thee from the torment of Hell and I seek refuge with Thee from the torment of the grave and I seek refuge with Thee from the trial of Dajjal and I seek refuge with Thee from the trial of life and death.

(2) Hadrat Anas (may Allah pleased with him)

said : that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) often recited this prayer :

"O our Lord grant us the good in this world and good in the Hereafter and save us from the torment of Hell-Fire.

(3) The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) told one of his companions: After having offered sunset prayer, before talking to anybody, recite this prayer for seven times :

O Allah protect me against Hell-Fire.

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) further told him that if he died on that very night (when he had recited his prayer) he would not be put into Hell. Repetition of this prayer after having offered morning prayer would also be a guarantee of his salvation.

(4) The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : Whosoever beseeches to God for Heaven for three times (daily), Heaven prays to God for him that

'O God Admit him to Heaven'

And whosoever asks Hell for pardon, for three times (daily) Hell prays to God for his redemption :

"O Allah protect him against Hell Fire" (*Targhib*).

Reflection and Relief

The circumstances of Hell and the condition of the denizens of Hell which you have read above are not meant to be superficially perused and then confined to the shelves of a cabinet and forgotten like ordinary tales and fictitious stories.

In point of fact the above-mentioned circumstances

and conditions are a translation from the verses of the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith of the Apostle (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) : hence they are perfectly true and authentic. If these are studied repeatedly and an account is taken of sins that we committ, it becomes easy for even a hard-hearted man to change the course of his life. Such a man can convince his soul of the tortures of Hell and thus he can dedicate himself to the performance of virtuous deeds. There is one condition, however, that a person should have firm faith in the Truth of the Lord of the Universe and His Holy Apostle (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and he should believe that the circumstances of Hell are an indubitable fact. The pious people keep on taking an account of their lives and solicit the Lord to protect them from Hell. How can it be that a man, who deems the circumstances of Hell to be true, should waste his life in the pleasures of the world and in the pursuit of mortal privilege and riches? The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed : "Hell has been concealed in the pleasures of the world and Paradise lies hidden in the hardships of life." (*Bukhari and Muslim*). The implication is that those who seek pleasure in life are really treading on a path that leads to Hell; and those whose souls suffer the hardships of life and yet they perform virtuous deeds, they, indeed, shall attain Paradise. Alas! those who put an end to their lives thinking that by so doing they shall get rid of the distress of life and having lost their patience in the face of the hardships and severity of the world exclaim: Hath the Lord no room for me even in Hell! Such people are ignorant of the circumstances of Hell.

As a matter of fact if they keep in mind the infernal fire, the snakes, scorpions, garments of fire, modes of torture and the foods of Hell, the people who hanker after the privileges of the membership of municipalities and legislative assemblies and engross themselves in erecting buildings, properties and amassing riches, cannot spoil the prospects of their salvation by indulging in great sins.

How can a person, who knows about the starvation in Hell, give up fasting? And he who knows about the torments of Hell—can he avoid offering prayers for the sake of a little sleep or temporary rest? He, who is aware of the pain caused by the stings of scorpions and the biting of snakes in Hell, can he ever say that keeping a beard irritates his skin? Those who are aware of grief can they think of worshipping without sincerity? And can they draw pictures knowing the tortures of this act in the Hereafter. Those who firmly believe that as punishment for drinking liquor, they will be made to drink the dirty bath water or excretion of the bodies of the denizens of Hell—can they touch liquor? No, certainly not! The fact of the matter is that the conditions of Paradise and Hell though much talked about, are not honestly believed in; otherwise not to speak of major sins, even the committal of minor lapses would be unthinkable to man. Hadrat 'Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) used to say : "If Paradise and Hell are placed before me, my faith will be no firmer than it already is; for my faith in the nseen is so strong that to believe on seeing and to :lieve without seeing is all one to me. Those who are aware of the conditions of Hell, they would not only

shun all sins but also renounce all laughter and happiness of the mortal world. A tradition incorporated in *al-Targhib-o-al-Tarhib* states : The Apostle of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) enquired from Hadrat Gabriel (may Allah be pleased with him) : "Why is it so that I have never seen a smile on the face of Mika'il (may Allah be pleased with him)?" Hadrat Gabriel (may Allah be pleased with him) submitted : "Mika'il has not laughed since the creation of Hell" (*Ahmad*).

A tradition reported in *Sahih Muslim* relates : "The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "I swear by the Lord Who hath Power over my life that if you had seen the spectacle which I had witnessed, you would certainly have wept more and laughed even less!" The companions (may Allah be pleased with them) submitted : "Apostle of God what did you see?" "I beheld Paradise and Hell", answered the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) (*Targhib*). Hadrat Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) used to say : "I wonder how people laugh when they know it for certain that they will not escape Hell." Hadrat Abu Sa'id (may Allah be pleased with him) reports : Once the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came out of his house and saw people laughing merrily. Upon seeings this, the Holy Prophet observed : "If you had kept death (which puts an end to all pleasures of life) constantly in your thoughts, you would not have found time to create such a scene as I am witnessing now." (*Mishkat*).

To sum up, only that man is alert and earnest who

makes provisions for his eternal life and who does not commit himself to Hell by falling into the snares of transitory wealth, privilege, pomp and rule. When he shall be put to torture, he will gain no relief by penitence or rubbing his hands in sorrow or saying, "Alas! Would that death had put an end to everything! My goods, my riches, my regal authority availed me not."

To be indifferent towards seeking the bliss of Paradise and to be negligent of the care of salvation from Hell, which is the home of unparalleled tortures, are the attributes of ignoramus; for Apostle of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has observed : "Strive as much as you can for the attainment of Paradise and keep as longer a distance from Hell as you can."

GLIMPSES OF PARADISE

A Religious Song in Praise of God

by the Poet of Islam, Hadrat Muztar, B.A., Gujrati

God has promised the pious,
their place in the blessed Paradise;
Holy Qur'an calls it Heaven;
verily, it is a place of immortal pleasure;
Streams of pure wine flow there,
And, what's more, there are flowing channels of sweet milk,
pure honey and radiant light,
Indeed the heaven is a land of Tasneem and Salsabil springs;
there is no match for it in the garden of the mortal world.
In the garden of heaven,
there are beds of blooming flowers of a variety of colours;
there are melodies in the rustlings of the leaves;

The branches are laden with luscious fruits,
As if silvery waves came up on the shore,
There are tents of pearls in the gardens,
where the beauteous houris inhabit;
Tents whose beauty passes all imagination!
Houris whose attractions are unique and matchless.
The pure servants reside in the bedecked castles carrying wine-cups, greetings on their lips and melodious songs in their throats.
Nothing in Heaven is mortal or knows decline.
It is permanent, devoid of all distress!
When the lovers of God shall enter the house of Paradise;
Their eyes will be built up with the light of Heaven;
And their hearts will be gladdened and refreshed.

* * *

In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Most Merciful.

The Nature of Paradise

The literal meaning of *Jannat* is to cover, to take a veil, to hide. Later the word *Jannat* was applied to the shady trees. The word was then used for a garden containing shady trees. In the Islamic terminology the word *Jannat* denoted the abode where the Faithful of God who perform good deeds will enter and make an eternal home.

The Reason of its Being Designated as Paradise

Why is that heavenly abode called by the name of

Jannat? Because this heavenly abode is hidden from the people of the world. It is invisible to man and what is going on in it is not audible to him. "And the Lord hath kept secret all the comforts and blessings of heaven from the eyes of His creatures." (*Bukhari*).

The Length and Breadth of Heaven

(1) The Holy Qur'an affirms that as concerns the breadth of heaven, it is as broad as the broadness of the sky and the earth.

(2) As regards its length a Hadith contained in *Sahih Muslim* only mentions that the space which even the lowest member of the fraternity of heaven will get in Paradise will be equal to ten times the area of the world.

(3) In another place it is affirmed that there is a tree in Heaven whose shadow spreads far and wide in an extent of area that a rider would travel on for a hundred years and yet would not cross the extent of that tree and further more it is said that the place for keeping your bow would be vaster than the extent of East and West. (*Bukhari*).

(4) The person who believes in One God and fears Him will get two big Gardens the extent of whose length and breadth will be so vast that should the person desire to look around over the entire area of the gardens it would take him a hundred years to cover the distance. (*Jawahir-ul-Tafasir*, p. 394).

(5) Each faithful shall have a tent made of a pearl; its length will be sixty miles. In each corner of the tent will reside his wives in such fashion that one will not be visible to another. (*Bukhari and Muslim*)

(6) The distance between the two arms of the frame of each door of Heaven will be so wide that should a man want to cover this width, it would take him forty years to complete the distance. (*Muslim*).

(7) Heaven consists of a hundred storeys. Between each two storeys there is a distance equal to the space between the sky and earth *i.e.*, a distance which can only be covered in a period of five hundred years. *Firdous* is the name of the topmost storey of Heaven and from here gush forth four streams. Above the *Firdous*, is the Abode of God.

Whenever thou shalt ask anything of God, ask for *Jannat-ul-Firdous* (*i.e.* admittance into the highest abode of Heaven just below the seat of the Almighty God) (*Tirmidhi*).

(8) Those who shall reside in the lower storeys of Heaven shall look upwards and the upper storeys (for reasons of immense distances between them) will seem to them, like brilliant star which you see in the Eastern or Western wing of the sky. The companions said : "O Prophet of God, these storeys are the abodes of prophets. Who else but the prophets can have access to them ?"

The Prophet observed : "Why ! I swear by Him Who hath Power over my life and state that those who affirmed their faith in God and supported and followed His Messengers shall reach there." (*Bukhari and Muslim*)

(9) There are a hundred levels (storeys) in the House of Paradise and each storey is so spacious that it can contain an assembly of all the people of the world.

Question : Where would such a vast mansion of

Paradise be located ?

Answer : Above the seventh sky, below the seat of God and the seat of God will be the ceiling of Paradise even as the sky serves as a ceiling of the earth.

Question : Would there be a sky such as this at that time ?

Answer : No, the sky shall be opened and passages through it will be made for those entering into Heaven.

Question : When the light has gone out of the sun will the Paradise remain dark or otherwise where will the light come from ?

Answer : Well, a blessed light will descend from the seat of God to illuminate the House of Paradise. At night curtains will fall and the people of Heaven will understand it is time to rest. At dawn the curtains will be removed and the people of Heaven shall know morning has come and they will come out of their peaceful abodes to walk around and make themselves merry.

The Material of which the House of Paradise is Built

The companions (may Allah be pleased with them) enquired from the Prophet of God (peace be upon him).: "What material has been used in the building of the Abode of Paradise ?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) said : "This Mansion is built of alternate bricks of gold and silver (*i.e.* one brick of gold laid upon one of silver and so on) ; in place of limestone pearls and gems have been used and the earth it is made of Saffron, yellow and sweet smelling. He who enters this Mansion will live in

peace and comfort and will be immortalised. He will never know death, nor will his dress wear off, nor his youth ever wither ; instead his youth will for ever remain in full bloom." (*Musnad Ahmad, Tirmidhi*).

Question : When will admittance to Heaven open ?

Answer : When this entire universe dissolves. By God's command Doom shall come. Thereafter all the people shall be revived and assembled near the Scales of Justice. There each person shall be called to account and the deeds of every person having been examined and checked the pious shall be admitted to Paradise and the evil shall be consigned to Hell.

A Query About Paradise

It is evident from the Holy Qur'an and Hadith that Paradise is the reward for goodness and obedience to God's commands, but we fail to understand that whereas we perform good deeds in this world, our reward should be withheld and its payment deferred till we reach the next world. We know not when we shall die ; or when the Doomsday will come ; or when the accounts (of our deeds) will be examined and when we shall enter Paradise ? After all why don't we get our reward for goodness while we live in this world ? Has not the Lord God power enough to repay us in this world ?

Answer : Yes indeed, the Lord God hath power enough to repay us in this world. But God's ways are wise. It is the wise design of God to wait till Doomsday before awarding prize for goodness (Paradise) or inflicting punishment for evil-doing. The elaboration of this grand design is as follows :

Man passes through three conditions :

First, his Condition in the World

In this state of existence each person has three types of rights ; for instance, the right to eat, drink, sleep and rest. In other words man on the whole is engrossed in procuring a hundred necessities of life. This is termed as the rights of self.

Second Type of Condition

In this condition man is bound by several relationships such as the relationship between a man and his wife; relations among friends; filial relationship between parents and offspring *i.e.*, father and mother; son and daughter etc. In the orbit of these relationships a man has to participate in the happiness of one and share the grief of another ; he has to fulfil the obligation of providing for and bearing the expenses of his dependants. These are called 'Social obligations'.

Third Condition of Man

In this condition man is under obligation at each step to obey God and offer prayers to him. There is *Namaz*; there is the commandment relating to keeping of fast; then there is the performance of Hajj and the payment of *Zakat*. The fact is that under this condition man is bound all around. In this manner there is hardly a time when the hapless fellow is completely free from manifold obligations. For this reason this world is called the world of action, the world of trial and tribulations and a House of labour.

The Story of Heaven as told by God Almighty

1. The Paradise which is promised to the pious and the faithful, its condition is this: There are several streams of water and no change in its properties will occur. There are several streams of milk, whose taste will remain fresh and unchanged. There are many streams of nectar which the drinkers will find sweet and delicious. There are several streams of pure honey. And there will be several species of fruit for the enjoyment of the people of Heaven.

(*Surah Muhammad*, part 26)

2. The person who, fearing the Day of Judgement, will obey Almighty God, will deserve Paradise twice over: one, as a reward for fearing the Almighty; another, reward for renunciation of other sins. These two Heavens will contain fruit trees in large numbers. Each tree will bear various types of fruits. These gardens will be spread to such lengths of area that, walking at moderate speed, a person would cover the distance in one hundred years. These gardens shall contain fine houses. There will be two springs in the garden: one called by the name of *Tasnim*, the other named as *Salsabil*.

The wonder attached to these two springs will be that their water will be freely available in all the houses of Paradise and the residents of these houses will be able to make free use of the water in every storey or corner of their homes. These two gardens will have this attribute : they will bear two kinds of fruits. One type of fruit will resemble the worldly fruits; the shape of the other type of fruit will be unseen and unheard of before. These people will

recline on beds against pillows. The bedcovers will be made of silken cloth and their outer covering will be made of light. The branches of trees will bend with the laden fruits. An attribute of the fruits will be that the desired fruit shall drop at once by itself into the mouth at your wish. In these gardens there will be modest damsels with lowered eyes untouched by any other man except their husband and the beauty of these women will be as resplendent as the pictures carved on corals and jewels. In point of fact these two heavens will be made of gold and all articles therein will also be golden. (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

These two heavens are, reserved for the earliest believers. Besides these two, there will be two heavens of silver and all articles therein shall also be made of silver. (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

The colour of these will be such deep green that it will enliven the eyes and refresh and please the heart. Herein will be two bubbling springs and abundance of fruit also, especially dates and pomegranates. These fruits are delicious besides having curative properties.

In these four gardens there will be such women who will be beautiful and of good character too. They will be seated in tents of pearls.

No one will have ever touched these women before they came to their husbands.

The residents of this Paradise will be reclining against pillows on precious beds and green carpets. These two heavens will be reserved for the people of the right side. It is observed in *Surah Waqia'*.

3. All the earliest believers will be seated face to

face on couches studded with precious stones. Boys who will never advance in years and will remain children for ever will attend on them and do them services. They will carry in their hands cups and glasses of pure nectar such as will neither cause headache nor will the person drinking it be intoxicated and talk nonsense. These children will also serve fruits which will gladden the heart and cooked flesh of fowls, appetising and delicious, will also be available. There will be Houris, with large, soft eyes clear as resplendent pearls. . No absurd, impudent talk will be heard, but only speech of peace and salvation. People on the right side will live in the gardens of plum, the trees of which will bear no thorns like the gardens of this world. There will be banana trees laden with fruit and ever-present shadows and perennially flowing waters and a variety of fruits which will not have dropped till then and there shall be no restriction on the use of these things. There will be costly beds. And women of the whole-world reborn virgin and endowed with new bloom and youthful age will make provisions for the solace and delight of the people on the right side.

4. And their salvation as a result of faith will lie in a vast and pleasant Paradise, whose breadth will be equal to the breadth of the earth and the sky. They shall receive fine quality silken dresses to wear and they shall recline against pillows on beds in comfort and with dignity. The climate will be so pleasant that they shall experience neither the blazing intensity of heat nor the extremity of cold weather. The trees of the garden of heaven will bend over them. The fruit-

laden branches of these trees will be proportionately so near that any heavenly person will be able to pluck them at ease, while sitting, reclining or in a standing position. In brief he will be able to pluck them easily at will. They will have silver utensils and silver tumblers so light and so clear that would seem as if they were made of glass. The style, shape and capacity of these tumblers would be in exact proportion to the needs for food and drink of the people of heaven, neither more nor less. Besides, these heavenly people will be served with cups of wine mixed with fennel which will make the flavour of the wine delicious and pleasant. But it would not be like the fennel of this world. They will mix with the wine some water from the spring called *Salsabil* which will give the flavour of fennel.

Some boys will be appointed to wait upon them who will have the following attributes :

(1) They will always remain at the age of boyhood ; neither will they grow up to youthful manhood, nor will they grow old.

(2) They will be pretty, delicate, of such pure and clear complexion that it would seem to one who looks at their delicacy and resplendent beauty as if pearls had been scattered about. When you see that place you can realise that a variety of limitless blessings have been provided there and the state of heaven is eternal and will not decline.

Their outer garments will be thin and made of very bright silk. And they will also have heavy silk clothes of green colour. They will wear silver bracelets to indicate their position as eminent companions and courtiers. And the best of all these blessings will

be this bounty : Almighty Lord of the universe will serve to them purified nectar with his own August Hands (Ask the feelings of the Lovers of God) and God will say: "This is the reward of your good deeds, for We are pleased with your labours." (*Surah Dahr*, part 29)

5. "Without doubt the God-fearing shall achieve their hearts' desires. Their station is exalted and dignified and there are fruit-laden gardens enclosed with walls for them. There are canopies of the vines of grape in these gardens, and pretty virgins in full bloom of 17-18 years of age, and cups of nectar full to the brim and there will be no absurd or false talk in their assembly *i.e.* the wine will have no intoxicating effect. And this is the reward that God has apportioned to thee according to your merit. (*Surah Naba'a* part 30).

Note : Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may God be pleased with him) states that the names of heavenly things are like unto the names of the worldly things but in substance the heavenly things will be different from worldly things, for the substance of worldly things is made of a dirty thing like earth, whereas the substance of heavenly things is pure soft light.

6. No doubt the pious shall find comfort and will possess all kinds of bounties. They will be seated on golden couches studded with precious stones and will enjoy the scenery of Paradise from their seats. The possession of rewards and solace will give to their faces a special kind of freshness. For drink they will get a sweet musk-smelling wine, especially sealed so that the sweet flavour may mix well in the wine and may refresh and enliven with fragrance the mind of the user.

And should the user desire to mix something with the wine, he will mix his wine with *Tasneem*, (not soda) *Tasneem* is an exclusive spring in Heaven and its special pure wine will be given to the chosen creatures of God ; but a portion of it will also be given to the *Abrar—i.e.* pious men of God, to flavour their wine. Hurry up then and crave for Heaven.

Note : It is recorded in Hadith that the flavour of this musk will be so sharp that should a man immerse his hand into it and then take it out, the scent would intoxicate and throw into forgetfulness all living creature of the world.

7. On that day many faces will look fresh and people will be honoured with rewards. They will enjoy peace and comfort in lofty heavens and will not come across anything distressing or distasteful. There will be a gushing spring in that place, waters of which will be cooler than ice and sweeter than honey. There will be lofty couches and wine glasses will be nicely arranged on them and spare velvets will be placed everywhere so that the people of Heaven may lay them out anywhere they want to. (*Surah Ghashiya* part 30)

8. All worldly friendships will turn into animosity except that the worldly friendships among God-fearing people shall remain firm even in Heaven. The God-fearing shall stand by each other in Heaven even as they stood by each other in worldly life, and the faithful shall receive a voice from God which will tell them in effect :—

(1 O My people ! you are free from this day from all sorts of anxieties and cares ; nor shall you

suffer any grief in future.

(2) O those who having believed in Our revelations remained faithful to Us! Enter Paradise with good cheer and take your wives alongwith you.

(3) Your servants shall continue to wait upon you with golden plates and glasses.

(4) In brief all these things that your hearts desire or your eyes wish to look at for pleasure will be made available in Paradise. As a matter of fact you shall for ever remain in the same state in the realm of Paradise. No sickness shall visit you ; neither any blessing will decrease or decline, nor any animosity or feuds will arise (like among the worldly rich). Neither will there be old age, nor anyone will know death.

Paradise is the name of the place where there is no pain of any sort, no dispute and no war.

The Story of Paradise as told by the Prophet (peace be upon him)

1. Hadrat Anas (Allah be pleased with him) states : "I begged the Prophet of God to intercede in my favour on the Day of Judgement." The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied, "Indeed I shall intercede on your behalf." Upon this I asked, "O Prophet, where shall I find you?" The Prophet answered : "First of all look me up on the Bridge of Destiny (through which the believers pass into Heaven)". I submitted : "If I can't find you there ?" The Prophet replied : "You may see me near the Scales of Judgement." I further submitted : "And if I do not meet you even there?" Upon this the Prophet observed : "Then search for me near about the cistern known as *Kauthar*. You

shall certainly find me at one of the above-mentioned places." (*Tirmidhi*).

2. The exalted Prophet (peace be upon him) affirmed : "When the pious shall be lodged in Heaven and the evil shall have been consigned to Hell, thereafter death (in the form of lamb) will be brought and death shall be slaughtered in the space between Heaven and Hell." An Announcer will then speak out : "O People of Heaven ! Death is no more. O People of Hell, henceforth no one will meet death. At the sight of this the happiness of the People of Heaven will be doubled and the distress of the Hell will increase." (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

The Woman of Paradise

3. The exalted Prophet (peace be upon him) observed : "To follow the way of God morning and evening is better than all worldly pursuits. And if a woman of Heaven were just to peep towards the earth, all the east and the west would be illuminated by the light of her beauty and her scent would perfume the air from the east to the west. And her (head-dress) is superior to all the world and its things.

Note : The meaning of the phrase 'In the way of God' includes Holy War, seeking knowledge, translating the Holy Qur'an or setting out from home to preach God's religion (*i.e.* as groups of preachers set out from the Raiwind Islamic Mission Centre, Distt : Lahore).

4. The Prophet of God (peace be upon him) observed : "The first group that shall enter Heaven, their faces will be brilliant as the light of the men of

the moon of the fourteenth night and these august faces will be of the Prophets of God (peace be upon them). The faces of the second group of people will be bright like the shining stars. Each man shall have two wives. The whiteness of the eyes of these women shall be the whitest and the pupils of their eyes will be the darkest and they will be wide-eyed. Each wife shall be wrapped in seventy gowns. The marrow of their calves will be so delicate and soft that it will be visible through the bone and the outer flesh. These people of Heaven will be ever mindful of God morning and evening. They will not fall ill ; they will not urinate or defecate ; nor will they spit ; neither will they need to clear their noses. Their utensils will be made of gold and silver. The fuel of their hearths will be of wood of aloes instead of coal. The smell of their sweat will be like the scent of musk. All of them will be polite towards one another. Their looks will resemble their pater Haḍrat Adam (peace be upon him) and their stature will measure sixty lengths of the sky." (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

5. The Prophet of God (peace be upon him) stated : "There will be a function in Heaven where Houris (women of heaven) will sing in such a melodious voice that such melody will be unheard of by men and these shall be their songs :

(Translation) We are immortal,
We shall never die,
We are born to enjoy comfort,
hence shall never know hardship ;
We are born of good cheer,
hence shall never be

unhappy;
Blessed be the man to whom we belong
And he is for us. (*Tirmidhi*).

The word 'Houri' refers to that woman whose eyes are sparkling white and lashes are extremely dark. The word 'ain' implies wide-eyed *i.e.* woman with large eyes.

6. The exalted Prophet of God (peace be upon him) affirmed : "The man in Heaven shall rest in Paradise on seventy pillows, in such a manner, that while turning over from one side to the other his head shall be comforted by several kinds of pillows. In the meanwhile a woman will appear and slap his shoulders all of a sudden in a captivating manner. The man will look around and see that the cheek of that woman is more radiant and clearer than the mirror and the man shall see his likeness in the mirror of her cheek. And such will be the splendour of this woman's dress that the most inferior among the pearls of her garments will have such glare that should it ever exist in the world its brilliance would illuminate the earth from east to the west and then there would be no need of the sun at all. At this time this woman shall greet the male inmate of Paradise. The man will reciprocate her greetings and enquire : "Who art thou"? She will answer : "God Almighty, besides other bounties of Heaven, has sent this humble one to serve thee. You have already got your due and now God has sent me in addition." This woman will be wrapped in seventy garments of different colours and the texture of these garments will be so fine and transparent that her whole body will be as clearly visible to the man as if

her whole body were naked.

And such will be the delicacy of her body and softness of her skin that the inner flesh of her shank will be seen through her wrappings. She will wear a precious crown on her head and the most inferior pearl of her crown will emit such glare as to illuminate the whole universe. (*Musnad Ahmad*).

Question : How could one see the inner flesh of the shank of that woman through seventy wrappings, skin, outerflesh and the bones ?

Answer : There is a modern invention in medical science called X-Rays. By means of the X-Ray machine the Doctor can see all inner organs, bones and flesh of the body. Hath not the Lord God more Power than man to effect such things?

The Virility of the Man of Paradise

7. The Prophet of God (peace be upon him) observed that the Heavenly man would be endowed with such virility that he would be able to cope with seventy-two women. The Companions (may God bless them) submitted : "O Prophet of God, will this man be potent enough to cope with so many women?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) said : "When man shall be endowed with the sexual powers of a hundred men, how could then he not be virile enough to copulate with so many women?" (*Tirmidhi*)

8. The Prophet of God (peace be upon him) observed : "Even if a heavenly thing equal to the size of a finger-nail were to appear in the world, it would beautify the whole earth and if a heavenly man were to peep into the world and his dress be revealed, the

brilliance of his face and dress would outshine the glare of the sun. The light of the sun would pale into insignificance before the brilliance of the person of a heavenly man even as the light of stars is dimmed out of sight by sunlight, and star-light disappears as soon as the sun rises.

9. The exalted Prophet (peace be upon him) observed : "The inmates of Paradise will have on their faces, just as there is no growth of hair on the cheeks in adolescent age. Their eyes will be naturally black. Their youth will be imperishable. Their dress will not wear off or become soiled." (*Tirmidhi*).

In the Hadith the word *Kohli* mentioned is and *Makhul* refers to a person whose lashes are naturally dark at the roots so that the observer may imagine that the person had applied collyrium to the eyes. And the word *Juro* means that his body will be hairless and 'man' refers to a boy whose face is clear of the growth of beard.

10. Hadrat Mu'adh b. Jabal (may God bless him) observed : "The people of heaven shall enter Paradise in such form that their bodies will be hairless; all the skin will be clear *i.e.* there will be no growth of hair on the chest, armpits, nor anywhere else. There will be no beard as yet on the face. The eyes shall look naturally dark (*i.e.* as if mascara had been applied to them). Their ages will be between 30 to 33 years. At this point Hadrat Mu'adh's memory got mixed up as to whether the Prophet (peace be upon him) had mentioned 30 or 33." (*Tirmidhi*).

The Lowliest Man in Paradise

11. The Prophet (peace be upon him) observed :

"Such will be the estate of even the lowliest heavenly person that he will be waited upon by eighty thousand servants and he will have seventy-two wives. A tent will be pitched for him. It will be made of pearls and rubies. The extent (*i.e.* length and breadth) of its size will be equal to the distance between Jabia and Sana. (Jabia is a city in Syria and Sana is the name of a place in Yemen). In other words the extent of the tent will cover the area equal to that between Yemen and Syria." (*Tirmidhi*).

God Addresses the Lowliest Heavenly Person Thrice

12. The exalted Prophet (peace be upon him) stated : "The lowliest station in Heaven would be that God Almighty will enquire from a heavenly person of this position : "Ask : What dost thou want?" Upon this the man will ask for the fulfilment of all his desires. God will then address him a second time thus ; "Whatever thou wished for, thou hast stated." The man will submit : "O God, I have asked for everything I desired." God will observe a third time : "You shall get all you have asked for. In addition, you shall get the same things in double measure from us. One measure of things for thy asking, and the other measure of things is added as our blessings; and thus is your desire twice fulfilled." (*Muslim*).

13. The Prophet of God (peace be upon him) stated : "The lowliest person in Heaven will possess such vast estate that he shall survey his gardens, his women, his bounties, his servants and his beds and couches in a thousand years' travels *i.e.* the property of

the most inferior heavenly man will be so large that its area could only be measured in a thousand years time." (*Tirmidhi*).

The Bazar of Heaven

14. The Prophet of God (peace be upon him) stated : "A bazar will be held in Paradise and the people of Paradise will visit this bazar on every Friday. And when these people will enter the Bazar, the northern breeze will blow and sprinkle various perfumes on their faces and garments and this breeze will have a special effect: the breeze will make the heavenly persons more beautiful than ever. Having made their round of the Bazar when these people shall return to their abodes, their inmates will enquire : "You have become very beautiful since you went out. What is the reason for this?" These people will reply, "By God, in my absence your beauty has also grown more bewitching and extremely attractive. Why is it so?"

The reason of the inmates acquiring more beauty will in all probability be the same as in the case of heavenly persons going to the Bazar. (*Muslim*).

15. Hadrat 'Ali (God's blessings be on him) reports the following tradition : "The Prophet of God (peace be upon him) stated that there would be a bazar in Paradise, but there will be no buying or selling of any kind in this bazar, herein will be nothing else except the statues of men, should the inmates of Paradise happen to like a certain statue that heavenly person will enter the same state *i.e.* the heavenly person shall be turned into the same shape and form that he likes best." (*Tirmidhi*).

16. Sa'id b. Musiyyab (may God bless him) met Hadrat Abu Huraira in the bazar of Medina. Abu Huraira said : "O Sa'id, I pray to Almighty God that you and I should meet in the Bazar of Paradise and you and I should get together there." Upon this Hadrat Sa'id enquired : "Will there be a bazar in Paradise?" Abu Huraira (may God bless him) said : "Yes, indeed. I was informed by the Prophet of God (peace be upon him) that when the inmates of Paradise shall enter herein they shall lodge in various sections according to their deserts. Those whose deeds will be better and numerous will get better and lofty abodes. Every Friday the heavenly people shall be commanded to set out from their places. On receiving the command these people shall set forth from their al des and shall be honoured with the vision of their Lord and that day God shall bestow upon them immense bounties of His pleasure and special blessings. God Almighty will hold court in the biggest garden of Paradise. Various types of seats will be arranged there according to the protocol of honour and position. Some seats will be made of light; some made of pearls; some of rubies ; some of emeralds; some made of gold and some others will be made of silver. Each heavenly person will take his seat according to his position. The most inferior among the heavenly people will be seated on mounds of musk and camphor and the wonderful thing would be that people seated on the mounds will not feel whether those seated on the chairs are superior to them in position or *vice versa*. For each one of the heavenly people will be content in his position and will be thankful and will never aspire for

a higher estate." After this Hadrat Abu Huraira states : "I submitted to the Prophet (peace be upon him) : Shall we have a vision of our Creator and Provider?" The Prophet replied : "Yes, indeed, you shall see Him. Do you doubt having sighted the sun and the moon of the fourteenth night?" I submitted, "No, I do not doubt having sighted the sun and the moon of the fourteenth night." The Prophet of God observed : "Likewise you shall not doubt having a vision of your Creator and Provider and there shall be none in that assembly with whom the Almighty God will not converse directly. They will be seated face to face with the Lord in an informal manner and there shall be no inhibitions between them. During conversation the Lord God will ask a man, "O son of so and so, dost thou remember the day when you said this and spoke thus and then God shall remind him of some of his acts of breach of faith which the person had committed during his lifetime." This man will submit, "O Lord, hast Thou not forgiven my sins?" The Lord shall declare, "Why! Yes I have forgiven thee. You entered this state due to the vastness of My Mercy and My Largesse." In the meantime a cloud will come and will shower such perfume that its scent will never have been smelled before. And during this shower of perfume the Lord God shall command: "Stay and reach for the thing which I had already prepared for thee and take freely whatever you wish for." Upon hearing this command of God we will come to a bazar. The angels will be posted on all four sides of the bazar. We shall see in this bazar things unseen and unheard of before, nor will such things have

entered our imaginations before this time. Thereafter we shall be given our favourite things free of charge, for there shall be no trade of buying or selling in this bazar. The inmates of Paradise will meet each other in this bazar. When a heavenly man of higher rank shall see a man of lower rank, neither of them will feel the difference of quality in their apparel *i.e.* the superior one will have no feelings of superiority, the inferior one will be free from any distress on account of feelings of inferiority because he shall have no such feelings. In my humble estimation the state of affairs seems to be that as soon as the two heavenly men meet each other the apparel of the inferior one will be made as resplendent as the dress of the superior person, so that neither the inferior should suffer distress on account of feelings of inferiority, nor the superior person should entertain any pride of superiority. Thereafter when we reach our respective abodes our women shall see us and say "God bless you! Welcome! How come? you look so handsome! When you went forth you were not so attractive and charming as you look now." In answer to this we shall say : "To-day we have been in the presence of Almighty God. Hence due to our presence in the company of God, we have been beautified and we have returned to you in such beauteous state." (*Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah*).

The Men and Women of Heaven

17. The Prophet of God (peace be upon him) stated : "After entering Heaven the men and women of Heaven will eat and drink; but in spite of having taken foods and drinks, they shall neither spit, nor

urinate or defecate. They shall not feel the need to clear their noses. The Companions (God's blessings be upon them) submitted: "In what manner will the body let out the excretions of its food and drink it takes?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) stated : "The body will excrete refuse in two ways: first, by belching, second, the body will sweat which will have the sweet scent of musk and the excretion of waste from the body shall be effected in these two ways. The men and women shall tell the beads and continue to offer praise to the Almighty Allah just as the system of inhaling and exhaling of breath continues without effort." (*Muslim*)

Four Communications to the Inmates of Paradise

18. The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed that when the inmates of Paradise will take their abode in Paradise, a caller shall make the following proclamation :—

(1) O inmates of Paradise! You shall always remain hale and hearty and shall never fall ill.

(2) And you are immortal and shall never meet death.

(3) And you shall eternally remain young, and never grow old.

(4) It is ordained that you shall always live in peace and comfort and you shall never suffer distress or hardhip. (*Muslim*).

The Hearts of the People of Heaven

19. The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Many peoples of such

nature will enter Paradise that their hearts shall be soft even as the hearts of the birds; and their hearts shall be pure *i.e.* devoid of evil designs and impurity of all sorts." (*Muslim*).

God's Special Communion With Heavenly People

20. Once the Holy Prophet stated : "Almighty God shall call upon the inmates of Paradise—both male and female : "O People of Heaven!" In answer to this call the heavenly people shall say "Yes, our Lord, we attend Thy court and Beneficence is in Thy Power alone. It is Your will to bestow Thy Grace on some and deny it to some others, for Thou art Omnipotent." At this the Almighty God shall enquire from the heavenly people, "Are you well pleased with us?" The inmates of Paradise will submit : "O our Lord, indeed we are well pleased with Thee and with none else. For it is Thou who hast bestowed upon us such blessings, out of Thy Grace and Munificence as Thou has bestowed upon no other species of Thy creatures." Upon this the Lord God shall observe "Shall I bestow upon you even better and finer things than you have hitherto known? The inmates of Paradise will submit : "What can be better and finer than the blessings Thou hast already showered upon us (the things that Thou hast provided for us in Paradise *i.e.* variety of foods, finest garments, best houses and gardens)." Upon this the Most Just Lord shall pronounce : "Well, I bestow upon thee a charter of My Eternal Grace. Henceforth I shall never be angry or displeased with you."

The inference is that the charter of God's grace is of such Supreme Value that in comparison to it all blessings of Paradise pale into insignificance. (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

21. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him observed : "When the inmates of Paradise shall be engaged in enjoyment of their blessings, suddenly a light shall appear. These people will raise their eyes to look at the light and they shall see that the Lord of the two worlds has revealed to them the splendour of His vision. At this moment the very first utterance of the Lord shall be 'Blessings be upon thee, People of Paradise', and this greeting shall be the same whose promise is contained in the following words of the Holy Qur'an : "A word of peace from the Most Merciful Lord." (*Surah Ya Sin* part 23).

Thereafter the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "God shall look upon them with love and these people shall see the vision of the Almighty and there shall be no veil between them. Such will be the impact of God's vision upon them that they shall forsake all blessings of Paradise as long as they are in the presence of the Supreme Vision and they shall be so absorbed in the Almighty that all heavenly bounties will fade from their memory. Thereafter the Almighty shall throw the veil once again between His splendid sight and the sight of the heavenly people but the impact of the light of God, the delight of His vision and all the feelings attached to the observation of the Supreme Lord will linger on." (*Ibn Majah*).

Question : Whereas the vision of the Almighty is

the Supreme blessing why shall the heavenly people not have it before them at all times and for ever ?

Answer : Even this (*i.e.* the Revelation of the vision of God) is the greatest favour of the Almighty Lord, for in addition to the pleasures of Heaven, people will have the privilege of indirectly seeing the splendour of God's vision. God shall thus reveal His vision for a little while and submerge the heavenly people in the pleasures of the bounties of Paradise; so that the people shall obtain new pleasure each time. The sun rises every day. Nobody shows much eagerness for looking at it ; on the other hand the 'Id Moon appears but once a year and how eagerly people look at it !

The Flying Horse of Paradise

22. Haḍrat Abu Ayyub Ansari (may Allah be pleased with him) reports that a desert Arab came to the Holy Prophet and submitted: "O Prophet of Allah I am very fond of horses. Will there be horses in heaven ?" The Holy Prophet observed : "If you were sent to Paradise, you would be given a horse made of emerald. The horse will have two wings. You would mount the horse and it would fly you to whereever it might be your pleasure to go." (*Tirmidhi*)

In fact this horse will be an aircraft in Heaven. The worldly aircraft is designed like a fish, whereas the heavenly aeroplane will be in the form of a horse. The worldly aircraft is made of aluminum ; the heavenly aeroplane will be made of emerald. Why wonder then ! There is no room for disbelief at all ! Some atheists failed to comprehend the meaning of this tradition. They used to raise many skeptical

questions about this observation of the Holy Prophet. But the invention of aeroplane has silenced these devotees of superficialities.

The Trees of Heaven

23. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) observed : "There is no tree in heaven whose trunk is not made of gold." (*Tirmidhi*). Further, "there are different kinds of branches in every tree. Some trees will have branches of gold ; some will have branches of silver ; some will have branches of rubies ; some will have branches of emerald and some trees will have branches of pearls. These trees have been embellished with a variety of bunches of fruits. There will be a flowing stream underneath every tree. (*Mazahar-i-Haq*, vol. 4, p. 438).

24. The daughter of Haḍrat Abu Bakr Siddique (may Allah be pleased with him), Haḍrat Asma (may Allah be pleased with her) states that once in the august assembly of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) mention was made of *Sidrat-ul-Muntaha*. Regarding this the Holy Prophet observed : "It is so huge that if a fast rider were to travel under its shadow, it would take him a hundred years to cover the space covered by the shadow of this tree and golden locusts perch on this tree. Perhaps by these golden locusts are meant the resplendent angels who, seated on this tree, are engaged in the pious remembrance and prayer to the God Almighty. The radiant wings of the angels have perhaps been compared to golden locusts. Further the Prophet had stated that the size of the fruit of this tree

is as big as jars." (*Tirmidhi*)

Sidratul Muntaha is the name of a tree whose roots are in the sixth heaven and its top reaches upto the seventh heaven : which is to say that it requires five hundred years' time to go over the distance covered by the length of *Sidratul Muntaha*. At this point all knowledge of the beginning and the end comes to naught. No species of creatures know what lies beyond ; not even an angel can soar beyond this point. At this same point inhibits the angel Gabriel (may Allah bless him) and beyond this even he may not venture. However the Mercy of the worlds Muhammad, the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) went beyond and above this point and had access to a place where no prophet had ever been before, nor any angel could ever tread there (may peace and blessings of God be on the Holy Prophet).

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) observed that Muslims destined to Hell will stand in line (like beggars) acrosss the passage of heavenly people. By chance an inmate of Paradise shall pass by them. On seeing him one of the evil-doer Muslims destined for Hell will raise a cry. He will hail the heavenly person by name and say: "O, so and so, dost thou not recognize me? I am the same man who gave you a drink of water in the world." Certain other fellow will call out, "I am the person who provided you water for ablution." The heavenly man shall admit both claims. In return for these favours the heavenly man will intercede with God in their favour, and thus will get them admitted into Paradise. The inference is that if an impious evil-doer shall render service to the pious, the religious, the

learned and the sages, he will be required for this service in the next world *i.e.* he will be admitted to Paradise on the recommendation of these personages. In this tradition the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) has enjoined upon the Muslims to do service to the learned and the pure. If perchance you are condemned to Hell on account of your sins, your service (to the learned sages) will then stand you in good stead ; you might enter Heaven in lieu of this service. Hence associate with them (*i.e.* the learned and revere them from the core of your hearts, for their company and their love constitutes the embellishment of this world and is the means of salvation and enlightenment in the Eternal world. (*Ibn Majah*).

Cultivation in Paradise

Hadrat Abu Huraira (may God bless him) reports the following tradition : A companion who resided in a village was sitting with the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him). The Prophet was at that time discoursing upon this point : A man among from the inmates of Paradise will demand from the Creator permission to engage in tilling. The Lord God will observe : "Are there not already enough blessings for thee according to your liking ?" The man will submit : "Yes, I have enough ; yet it is my heart's desire to engage myself in tilling." Hence the permission will be granted to him. He will sow the seed in the soil and lo! Green plants will sprout forth in a shorter time than it takes it to wink, and it will grow, the field will be ready and the harvest will be reaped and mountains of crops will be gathered. God shall observe : "O Son of

Adam! Take this ! Nothing suffices for thy greed."

On hearing this discourse of the Holy Prophet, the companion from the village submitted : "By God ! That fellow must be from among the tribe of Quraish or Ansar, for only these people are agriculturists. Our vocation is not cultivation of the soil ; so why should any of us make such a petition to the Lord?'' Upon hearing this the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) broke into a smile.

The Birds of Paradise

The people of Heaven shall be served flesh of fowls as has been affirmed in *Surah Waqia'* :

And the flesh of the fowls they would deserve. Hadrat Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) reports the tradition : The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) observed : "Indeed there are birds having long necks and of the size of camels in Paradise. These birds fly about and eat the fruits of the trees of Paradise. Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique (may God be pleased with him) submitted, "they are leading a good life, indeed!" The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Those who eat the flesh of these birds will lead even better life." The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) repeated this observation thrice and then conveying happy tidings to Hadrat Abu Bakr said : "I trust you shall be one of those who will enjoy the flesh of these birds." (*Targhib on the authority of Ibn Abu Dunya*). Hadrat Abu Umama (may Allah be pleased with him) stated that when a heavenly person shall feel hungry and would want to eat the flesh of a

bird, the bird will itself fall before him, ready cooked and its meat well-cut into slices. According to another tradition the bird will fall of itself on table-cloth of the inmate of Paradise. The bird shall have been cooked or roasted without fire or smoke. The heavenly person shall partake of the flesh of the bird according to his appetite. Thereafter lo ! the bird will fly away.

The Amusements of the Inmates of Paradise

Almighty God has observed in *Surah Tur* : "They (the heavenly people) will wrangle among themselves over cups of wine. This wine will have no intoxicating effect. Hence having drunk this wine they will not indulge in absurdities or any impudent talk." (There will be no talk contrary to wisdom or propriety).

This wrangling will be a part of merry-making and good cheer among the heavenly people, for no person in heaven will be in want of anything. Among friends wrangling increases the joy of feasting and this state is well known to those who love good-fellowship.

A Special Prayer of the Houris and their Sympathy for their Husbands

According to a tradition related by Hadrat 'Abdullah b. 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet of God (peace be upon him) affirmed : "Indeed the Heaven is embellished to celebrate the month of Ramadan from the beginning to the close of the year. On the first day of Ramadan a breeze comes from the rustling of the leaves of Paradise over

the Houris beneath the Throne. The breeze affects the Houris and they break into prayers thus : 'O our Lord ! give us husbands from among thy created men whose sight may please and refresh our vision'." (*Baihaqi in Shu'ab-al-Iman*).

Hadrat Mu'adh (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) observed : "Whenever a worldly woman vexes her husband, his appointed wife, the Houri in Heaven, curses that worldly woman saying : 'Curse be on you ! Do not trouble him, for he is only thy guest for a few days. He will soon leave you and come over to me'." (*Tirmidhi*).

Both these traditions testify that the Houris are an established substantive fact even as Paradise and all its blessings exist as a matter of positive fact.

In *Al-Targhib* Hafiz Mundhri (may Allah have mercy upon him) has quoted in some detail a tradition related by the mother of the faithful Hadrat Umm Salama (may Allah be pleased with her). According to this tradition Hadrat Umm Salama (may Allah be pleased with her) enquired : "O Prophet of God, who will be in a supermost position in Paradise : Pious woman of the world or the Houris ?" The Holy Prophet answered : "The pious woman of the world will be supermost than the Houris even as the outer cover of the quilt is superior in quality to the inner covering." Hadrat Umm Salama enquired : "O Prophet of God ! Why will this be so ?" The Holy Prophet replied : "It will be so because the pious women of the world offer prayers to God, keep fasts and worship the Most Exalted and Magnificent God !"

Hadrat Umm Salama (may Allah be pleased with her) submitted : "O Prophet of God, sometimes a woman enters into marriage contract with two, three or four men successively. After completing worldly life she will enter Paradise and her husbands will also enter Paradise with her. In that event who (from among all her worldly husbands) will be her husband in Heaven?" The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) answered : "Umm Salama, that woman will be allowed free option to live with whomsoever she wishes. She will choose the man who was (in the world) best in morals amongst her husbands. She will say, "O God, this man treated me with more benevolence than all the others, please make him my spouse''. Having said this the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) observed : "O Umm Salama, benevolence carries all the blessings of this world and the next."

The authenticity of this tradition is not sound. According to some traditions a woman who entered into marriage contract with successive men will be given in Paradise to the last man she wedded in the world. Whatever the case may be it is certain that no man or woman will live without a spouse in heaven. Some people still go about enquiring as to what will become of a woman in Heaven who hath wedded two husbands in the world? This question after all does not form the basis of our faith and therefore should not be considered worthy of great importance. Whatever Almighty God prescribes will be better for one and all.

The Chorus-Song of the Houris in Heaven

Hadrat 'Ali Murtaḍa (may Allah be pleased with

him) reports a tradition that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "There is a place in Heaven where Houris assemble and raise their voices and sing :

We are Immortal ;
We know no death ;
We shall always remain in all peace and comfort;
And shall know no deprivation ;
We shall be in harmony with our husbands ;
And never shall we be in discord with them;
Praise be to Him Who is with us,
And, verily, we belong to Him.

The Houris sing this chorus in such a melodious voice that such sweet voices are unheard of among all species of creatures. (*Tirmidhi*).

Polygamy in Paradise

How many wives will a man have in Paradise is the subject of many traditions which have been handed down. A tradition in *Bukhari* says : Each man shall have two Houris as his wives.

Hafiz Ibn-i-Hajar (God's mercy be on him) has discussed this point in detail in *Fath-ul-Bari* and has collected many traditions in this respect. He has narrated a tradition from *Musnad Ahmad* which affirms that the lowliest man in heaven will have seventy-two spouses, in addition to his worldly wives. According to a tradition in *Abu Ya'la*, a man will have two wives from the species of Adam and seventy-two spouses from among those who will be created by God in the heavenly world.

A tradition of Ibn-Majah relates that the heavenly

man shall have seventy-two wives from among the Houris and another seventy-two from among worldly women. Apart from these some other traditions have also been quoted by the author of *Fath-ul Bari*.

The traditions in this connection are both sound and weak. By and large it is conclusive that the heavenly persons will be blessed with many wives, in addition to other bounties and no man shall have less than two spouses.

As regards the difference of opinion about the number of wives, this perhaps will be settled according to virtuous deeds of the respective persons. In other words, we might say that the difference in position will be determined by pure deeds of every man and the number of wives given to each man will be according to his position in Heaven.

In every case God knows better and it is He Who dispenses all blessings. Some people ask the question: "When one man shall have several wives, how many men shall a woman have?" This is a very absurd question. Because whereas it is a blessing for a man to have several wives, it is highly disgraceful for the gentle, the modest and the men of honour that a woman should have several husbands.

When such dishonour is intolerable in this world, who will bear such disgrace in Heaven. The attribute of a heavenly woman is described thus in the Holy Qur'an.

The virtue of heavenly women will be that they shall keep their gaze low and will refrain from glancing at any other man except their husbands. In other words they will be well-content with one husband and will love him with their heart and soul. But some

men of this world absurdly advocate that heavenly women should be allowed more than one husband, whereas they are well-content with only one husband and are in happy concord with him, why should they need another one?

It is a pity that ignorant critics have imagined the heavenly women to be like lewd women and similar to the promiscuous European ladies of modern civilization. It would have been proper if they had kept their women in seclusion in the manner of the heavenly women and made them models of chaste women with restrained looks and fair maidens guarded in pavilions but instead of learning the lesson of seclusion from the Houris, the ignoramuses have proposed a dishonourable mode of life for the heavenly women.

The Crowns of the Inmates of Paradise

Hadrat Abu Sa'id Khudri (may Allah be pleased with him) reports a tradition that the Holy Prophet affirmed : "The people of Heaven will wear crowns on their heads. The most inferior pearl in these crowns emits such great radiance that it can illuminate the entire space between the east and the west." (*Tirmidhi*). In other words if the inferior most pearl of these crowns were to appear in the world its light would spread in the entire world from the east to west.

The Facts about the Stream in Heaven i.e. the Kauthar

The Mercy of the Worlds (peace be upon him) observed : "The size of the pond of *Kauthar* will be equal to the spatial distance between Adan and 'Amman

or in other words between Yemen and Syria. Its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey. The number of its water jugs is equal to the number of stars in the sky. He who drinks its water but once will never feel thirsty again. The first group of people who will come to this stream to have a drink of water will be the beggar refugees (Muhajrin immigrants who migrated from Holy Mecca to the sacred Medina in the days of the Holy Prophet). These people were (in worldly life) poor and due to indigence their hair appeared dishevelled and their clothes were soiled with dirt. No wealthy woman ever consented to marry them. When they begged at a door, the door was not opened for them. In other words they were neglected when they sought help at the homes of worldly people just as in modern times the rich treat the poor and indigent with disdain." (*Musnad Ahmad*). The Prophet of God (peace be upon him) affirmed : "When I entered Paradise in Shab-i-Mi'raj, I walked about and came to a stream on the either bank of which stand hollow domes made of pearls. They are hollow inside so that heavenly people may inhabit there. I asked Gabriel (God bless him) : "What is this ?" "This is the same stream of Heaven (*Kauthar*) which is God's blessing upon thee." When I examined the soil of this stream it had a sweet smell like the scent of musk. (*Bukhari*).

Note : Allama Qurtabi observes : "Our Guide, Muhammad (peace be upon him) will be blessed with two ponds. The first pond will be given to him on the plain where the whole world will be assembled on the Day of Judgement so that people who rise from their graves feeling thirsty may quench their thirst

from the pond (*Sabil*) of the Holy Prophet. Similarly, every prophet will have a pond of water so that his followers may quench their thirst from it. The prophets will anticipate with some sense of privilege among themselves as to on whose pond the largest number of people come. The Prophet of God (peace be upon him) stated that he hoped that the largest number of people would gather at his pond. The second pond will be given in Paradise exclusively to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) ; no other prophet will get a pond in Heaven."

Both ponds with which the Holy Prophet will be blessed are called *Kauthar*. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "The extent of the length and breadth of my pond is equal to the distance which can only be covered by a month's journey. Its water is whiter than milk and its scent gives out greater sweetness of smell than that of the purest musk. Its drinking cups are radiant like stars. Anyone who drinks but once the water of this pond will never feel thirsty again." (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

Question : When nobody will ever feel thirsty after drinking water from the pond *Kauthar* ; will not then the milk of heaven, the honey and the streams of wine be redundant ? What use there would be of all these blessings ?

Answer : The heavenly person will drink from all these streams, not because he will be thirsty, but only to take delight, for in Heaven nobody shall be hungry, thirsty or in want of clothes nor will they feel heat of the sun.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah

be upon him) observed : "The span of the pond is greater than the distance between the shores of Syria and 'Aden, the shore of Yemen. The water of this pond is cooler than ice and is sweeter than the taste of the honey mixed in milk. The number of its drinking jars is larger than the number of stars. And I shall forbid the non-believers from drinking out of this pond even as a person prevents the camels of other people from drinking out of his pond. The Companions submitted : "O Prophet of God, Will you recognize us on that day?" The Prophet observed : "You shall have some special attributes and signs of identification which other people will not bear. You will come to me in such a state that your forehead, hands and feet will be glowing with the light and purity of ablutions." (*Muslim*).

Note : Various lengths regarding the span of the pond of Heaven have been stated. In some places its length has been mentioned as equal to the distance from 'Aden to 'Amman (Bulghar) and on other occasions it has been stated as equal to the space covered by a month's journey. In other places the distance from 'Aden to Ealia has been stated as equal to the span of the pond of *Kauthar*. The variation is due to the fact that on every occasion the distance had to be explained to each man according to his understanding. Otherwise, the Holy Prophet never mentioned the measure of its area in exact figures. Hence no question can now be raised in this respect.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed : "I shall be the guardian of your provisions on the pond of *Kauthar*. I shall be present there before you in order to look after your

needs. The man who shall pass by me will drink its water and he who drinks out of the waters of *Kauthar* will never feel thirsty again. However, many peoples from amongst my followers will come before me whom I shall recognize and they shall recogise me, but then a veil will descend between them and me. I shall affirm that these people are my followers, but I shall be informed that these people introduced evils and made innovations in my religion after I had gone. Upon hearing this I shall tell these people, "Be off and take yourselves away from me those of you who modified my law and religion and adopted innovations of their own will after I had gone." (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

The inference is that on account of their evil nature and impurity the evil-doers and the innovators will be deprived of the water of the pond of *Kauthar* around the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). Hence we should abstain from adopting innovations of all kinds and we ought to follow the sacred sunnah of the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

Haḍrat Anas reports a tradition that it was enquired of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) "What is *Kauthar*?"

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed :

(1) It is a stream with which God has blessed me in Heaven;

(2) Its water is whiter than milk;

(3) Its water is sweeter than honey and more delicious in taste; and

(4) There are birds on its banks whose necks are

as long as the necks of the camels.

Haḍrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) submitted, "Will those birds be fat and fleshy?" Upon this the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Those who eat the flesh of these birds will be robust." (*Tirmidhi*).

The Last Man in Paradise

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "A group of Muslims will be released from Hell, for I shall intercede on their behalf; and they shall enter Paradise. But they shall be called People of Hell even in Paradise." (*Bukhari*).

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) affirmed :

"I know the last man who will come out of Hell and I know him who will enter Paradise last of all. A man will crawl out of Hell on his knees in childlike manner. God will command him to enter Paradise. This man from Hell will come to Heaven on the bidding of the Lord. The man will realise that Paradise is already full to capacity and there is no room for him here where he can make a dwelling. This man will petition God : "O Lord, Heaven is full to capacity. There is no room to accommodate me." Upon this the Most Just Lord will command him to enter Heaven saying : "Enter Paradise, and thou shalt have ten times the area of the earth in it." On hearing this the man will submit to the Almighty God: "Oh God, Thou art the Lord of the kingdom of Heaven and Thou jokest with me!" Ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) reports that having

uttered the last sentence, the Prophet of God burst into laughter. The happy laughter on his lips revealed his gums. The man (mentioned above as coming from Hell to Heaven) will be the lowliest person in Heaven. (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

Hadrat Abu Dharr (God be pleased with him) reports the following tradition : "The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "I know the man well enough who will enter Heaven last of all and I know the man well enough who will be last one to come out of Hell. There will be a man who will be called forth on the Day of Judgement and God shall command that his minor sins should be presented, withholding the major ones. Hence that man will be reminded of his minor sins and he will be told, "You committed this sin on this day." This man will plead guilty to these charges and will not be able to deny them. He will be afraid lest his major offences be also brought forward and then he might receive the greatest punishment from the Almighty. While the man will be in this state of mind, the Lord of the two worlds will command him thus : "Go We have changed every evil committed by you into a good deed." Upon hearing this command of the Most Just Lord this sinful man will submit : "O Lord, there are yet greater sins that I am guilty of. Those sins have not been included in my Roll of Deeds." Hadrat Abu Dharr (may God be pleased with him) states "Having narrated this Hadith the Holy Prophet laughed so much that his gums became visible." (*Muslim*).

Hadrat Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) reports this tradition : The Holy Prophet (peace and

blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : The last four men will be released from Hell and they will be presented before the Most Just Lord. On this occasion the Lord God will command that these men should be returned to confinement in Hell. At this moment one of these men will turn towards the Almighty and submit : "O my Lord, I strongly trust upon Thy mercy that when Thou hast once released me from Hell you will not condemn me to Hell a second time." The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stated : "Upon hearing this submission God Almighty shall grant him salvation and admit him to Heaven." (*Muslim*).

A Debate Between Heaven and Hell

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "The Paradise and the Hell once fell into argumentation. The Hell said, "The most pompous tyrants, Emperors like the Pharaohs, Shaddad and Nimrod and Great Capitalists like Qaroon, Abu Jahl and Abu Lahb will dwell in me." The Heaven sadly observed : "On the whole the old, the infirm, the lowly, the unknown, the downtrodden who are despised and hold no prominence among the people and the hungry persons will enter in here."

On this occasion Almighty God proclaimed : "O Heaven, you are the place upon which I have showered all My blessings. Whomsoever I will to bless, I shall send him into thee." God Almighty then proclaimed to the Hell : "O Hell ! thou art a place for those who are condemned to chastisement whomsoever I wish to condemn to torment, I shall consign him to thee."

Further God Almighty told Heaven and Hell, "I shall fill both of you to your full capacity." However, Hell will not be filled to capacity until High Lord Himself puts His foot inside it. Thereupon Hell will submit, "Enough, enough, enough !" and then Hell will be filled to its utmost limits. Some parts of Hell will amalgamate with some other parts. Hell shall contract and will become narrow and small in size. God does not treat His creatures with cruelty; and in order to fill Heaven to its extreme limits God shall raise new creatures." (*Bukhari & Muslim*).

Sha'vana the Pious in Paradise

Muhammad b. Mu'adh (Allah be pleased with him) states : "A pious and devout woman reported to me, "I dreamt that I am approaching towards Paradise to gain admittance therein. I observed that all the people were standing at the Gate of Heaven. I asked : "What is this ? Why are all these people gathered here at the Gate of Heaven." Someone told, "A woman is due to arrive here and the Paradise has been embellished to celebrate her arrival. These people have come out of Heaven to welcome her." I enquired: "Who is that woman ?" They replied: "She is a black slave girl called Sha'vana who hails from Eaka." I said, "By God, she is my own sister." Presently I beheld Sha'vana approaching, seated on a beautiful, well-bred she-camel flying in the air. I called out to her, "O sister of mine, do you know the relationship between you and me ? Please pray to Almighty God to join me with you." Upon hearing this Sha'vana smiled and said : "Your time has not

come yet. But learn two points from me and remember them : The care of your end must be your constant concern and, secondly, keep all other desires subservient to the Love of God ; and care not for the time of your death. In other words, be prepared for the end at all times."

The Positions Attained in Heaven by the Friends of Almighty Allah

The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was once sitting in the assembly of his august companions (may Allah be pleased with them). The Prophet observed : "I saw Paradise and your positions in Paradise last night." Thereafter turning to Hadrat Abu Bakr, Siddiq (the Trustworthy), the Holy Prophet said : I beheld a man. Whichever gate of Heaven that man approached loud greetings come out "Praise be to you, welcome ! Praise be to you ! Welcome ! come in, come in."

There is a special gate in Heaven reserved for each good deed. The fact that every gate of Heaven should welcome a person means that in every good deed and virtue that person's station would be highest indeed.

Hadart Salman submitted : "O Prophet of God, the man who holds such a high position must be pre-eminent indeed."

The Holy Prophet affirmed, "This person is Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him)." Thereafter turning to Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "In Heaven I saw a house made of

white pearl. This house was studded with emeralds." I asked : "Who owns this house ?" I was told : "This house belongs to young man of the tribe of Quraish."

Due to the beauty, radiance and the most joyful atmosphere of the house and because of my position as the Chief among God's Prophets I imagined the house belonged to me. When I was about to enter it, I was told that the house belonged to 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him). Later the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) told about the positions that Hadrat 'Uthman (God bless him), Hadrat 'Ali (blessings of God be upon him) and many other persons would hold in Paradise. The Prophet of God (peace be upon him) then turned towards Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman b. 'Auf (may Allah be pleased with him) and observed: "From amongst all my companions you came to me very late. I had been anxious about you and thought per chance you had died; and I saw that you were drenched in perspiration. I enquired from you, "Where were you ? Why are you so late in arriving." You answered : "Since my assets were large, I was taken up with the rendering of accounts : Where did I earn and where did I spend?" Hearing this about himself Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman b. 'Auf (God bless him) started weeping and submitted : "O Prophet of God ! only this night one hundred camels laden with merchandise from Egypt have reached me. I give them in charity to the destitutes and orphans of the sacred city of Medina. Per chance because of this deed Almighty Allah may lessen the burden of my accountability on that Day." (*Targhib*).

According to one tradition the Holy Prophet

(peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) once observed : "'Abdur Rahman you are the most generous person among my people and you will crawl into Heaven (you will not walk into Heaven on your feet). Give credit to thy Lord, so that you may stand upon your feet." Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman (may Allah be pleased with him) asked : "O Holy Prophet, what should I give in credit to the Lord?" The Holy Prophet replied : "Give all you have. Upon hearing this Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman stood up at once with the intention of fetching all his goods and putting them before the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sent a messenger after him to call him back and observed to him: Hadrat Gabriel arrived just now and has left a message to the effect, "Tell 'Abdur Rahman to show hospitality to guests, feed the poor, fulfil the need of the supplicants. He should begin his charity from his own family This is enough to purify his soul." This same 'Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf (God bless him) is ranked as an eminent companion, a man of great virtues and he is counted among, those of the ten venerable companions to whom the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had conveyed in their lifetime the glad tidings of Heaven. Moreover, he was one of those six men upon whom Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) at the time of his martydom had laid the responsibility of choosing a caliph. Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) had observed in respect of these men : "The Holy Prophet left the world well-content and satisfied about the conduct of these men."

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Later the other five of this six-member committee had decided to leave the choice of the Caliph to his discretion alone and it was upon his suggestion that Hadrat 'Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) was appointed as the third caliph. Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman b. 'Auf (God bless him) is regarded as one of the earliest converts to Islam in respect of whom God has observed :

> "And those *Muhajrin* and *Ansar* who were the first to accept the faith and are the oldest believers among the *ummat* and those who follow them in all sincerity (may God be pleased with them) and all of them are well-content with God. The Almighty Lord has laid out for them gardens beneath which streams flow and these people will dwell in these gardens for ever."

Besides all this, Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman b. 'Auf (may Allah be pleased with him) migrated twice ; he fought in the battle of Badr and in all the other Holy wars during the Prophet's lifetime. Even during the time of the Prophet he was looked upon as one of the learned men and a jurist. Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) adopted certain measures relying upon his counsel alone. The Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had once offered prayers behind him while he led the prayers during a journey. It so happened that the Holy Prophet departed for a while to fulfil some need. In the absence of the Prophet, the companions had chosen 'Abdur Rahman b. 'Auf to lead the prayers. When the Holy Prophet returned the prayer was in progress : a

rak'a had been completed. So the Holy Prophet offered the prayers behind him. When Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) became Caliph, he appointed 'Abdur Rahman b. 'Auf to serve as Acting Chief of the Pilgrims on his personal behalf in the first year of his reign. (*Asaba*).

As a matter of fact in spite of his multifarious virtues, the abundance of his wealth was his main drawback in comparison to other men of equal position. And his wealth had come to him through the favour of the Just Lord and his riches were Blessing and Beneficence of God only; otherwise he was a very poor man indeed. During the early days of migration when the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had made *Muhajrin* and *Ansar* brothers unto one another so that destitute and poor among the *Muhajrin* might receive benefit and help from the *Ansar* due to this special brotherly relationship, Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman b. 'Auf (may Allah be pleased with him) was paired as brother with Hadrat Sa'd b. Rabi' Ansari (may Allah be pleased with him). Hadrat Sa'd had told Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman : "Almighty God hath blessed me with property and abundant wealth in Medina. I shall share with you half of everything. I have two wives ; which one of the two you fancy, I shall divorce her. When the statutory period (*'Iddat*) is over, you can marry her." Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman replied : "May God increase your property. I do not covet anything belonging to you. Show me the way to the market here." Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman went to the market and started buying and selling goods. In the evening, he brought home the dividend of his

day's business : Some butter oil and a piece of cheese. He likewise went to the market daily and after some time having saved enough money, he got married. (*Bukhari*).

Then a time came when the Holy Prophet called upon him to offer his goods in charity, whereupon he gave away half of all his goods in charity, and the enormity of his wealth (as has been stated above) can be determined from the fact that a hundred camels laden with merchandise had come to him from Egypt alone, and he gave all of them in charity. Thereafter once he doled out forty thousand dinars. On one occasion he gave a donation of five hundred horses and five hundred camels for *jihad*. He released thirty thousand slaves from bondage, and according to one tradition he secured emancipation for thirty thousand families and in each household the number of men, women and children slaves cannot be exactly determined. (*Mustadrak*).

Once upon a time he sold his lands for forty thousand golden coins and distributed the entire amount among the destitute, the emigrants, his own relatives and the wives of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). (*Mustadrak*).

At the time of his death he bequeathed in his will four hundred red *dinars* (gold coins) to each man who fought in the battle of Badr. At that time one hundred veterans of the Badr war were alive. (*Asaba*). He also left a garden which was sold for forty thousand gold coins as a legacy to the wives of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). His own outlook was such that once he sat down to dinner after taking a bath. He was served a mixed

meal of bread and meat in a cup. On seeing this, he wept. Someone asked the reason of his weeping. He observed : "The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) died in such state that he could not afford enough oat-bread to eat to his fill. This opulence is not propitious for me. (*Asaba*).

If opulence had been propitious, it would also have been given to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). When the Holy Prophet was not blessed with such opulence, it must be deemed unpropitious." In spite of his perfect virtues, the accountability to which Hadrat 'Abdur Rahman would be subjected on the Day of Judgement has been mentioned above.

There will be Cupfuls of Pure Wines for the Pious

Without doubt the pious shall drink cups of wine mixed with camphor and these cups will be filled from the springs which have been reserved for friends of God. (A unique characteristics of these springs will be that the heavenly people would be able to take them anywhere they wish (in other words these springs will be entirely at their command). These are the people who fulfil their obligations and likewise meet all other requirements and they are afraid of the Day whose horridness will be widespread (*i.e.* generally will feel uneasy and feel embarrassed on that Day).

There are the people who feed the poor, the orphan and the captive (even though these captives were infidels and fought against the faithful) for the love of Almighty God ; and these people feel in their

hearts or even say by word of mouth." We give you food for the sake of the Lord. We don't want anything in return from you. nor do we wish to receive your thanks. We feed you because we fear the hard and bitter Day (Judgement Day) that Allah will establish''. Hence the Mighty Lord shall save them from hardships of that Day.

God will bestow upon them good cheer and comfort, and the Lord, in return for their unflinching faith, will grant them Paradise and dresses of silk. They will live in such style that they will be reclining on beds against pillows ; shall neither suffer burning intensity of heat nor cold (instead the climate will be pleasant and moderate). The shades of trees will spread over them and the bunches of fruits will be entirely at their disposal (whenever they wish for a fruit, the fruit will of itself come within their reach. Silver vessels and cups of glass will be provided to them for food and drink. These glasses will be made of silver (in other words those glasses, instead of being made of mirror glass will be made of silver, which is not at all impossible in the upper world). The cup-bearers will have filled the cups keeping in view the exact requirement of the heavenly person (neither more nor less than is needed). And in Heaven not only cups of wine mixed with camphor but cups of wine mixed with ginger will also be served. (Ginger that is mixed in the soda water bottle).

These cups will be filled from a spring which is called *Salsabil*. (Camphor has a cooling effect and ginger produces warmth. The upshot is that wines of different properties and effects will be available in

Heaven). These cups will be carried about and served by boys who will never advance in years and will for ever remain at the same age and these boys will be so pretty that the observer will imagine them like so many pearls scattered here and there. (And not only the things that have been mentioned above but even more) when you shall see that place you will observe many blessings and a vast country. The heavenly people shall wear thin green clothes of silk and they shall also wear dresses made of thick silk (in other words there will be finest garments of various designs and colours). They will be given silver bangles to wear on their arms and the Lord will give them to drink the purest wine and it shall be proclaimed to them, "Take this in return for your deeds and the endeavour you made in the world deserves merit indeed." Wine has been mentioned thrice in these Holy statements and on all three occasions the nature of wine and its use is differently described. In the first place, only the drinking of wine has been mentioned. In the second place it is mentioned that waiters will serve the wine. In the third place it is stated that God Almighty, the Lord of the Universe, will Himself give away the wine (to the heavenly people). It is not beyond possibility that this may be so due to the three categories into which the inmates of Paradise will be divided : the lowly, the middle class and the uppermost. Being mindful of the august blessings and privileges that are mentioned in these verses as due to the pious, especially those who feed others for the love of God then if we have perfect faith, no man, following the manner of Abu Bakr (God bless him)

will keep anything in his house save what is for the sake of the Holy Names of Almighy Allah and His Illustrious Prophet.

Some points in these verses are worthy of consideration :

(1) First of all the springs have been mentioned and it has been stated that the heavenly people will take these springs whenever they wish. Explaining this Mujahid (God be kind to him) says that the heavenly people will pull the springs to whichever place they wish. Says Qatada (may Allah show mercy to him) : "Their waters will be mixed with camphor and they will be sealed over with musk and the springs will flow to whichever direction the heavenly people wish them to flow." Ibn-i-Shoudhab (God be kind to him) says : "The heavenly people shall hold golden staffs and to whichever direction they point with their staffs, the streams will start flowing towards that direction."

(2) In respect of the fulfilment of the vows it has been reported from Qatada (may Allah be pleased with him) that they are the people who carry out all commands of Almighty Allah. That is the reason why these people were first called 'Abrar'. Mujahid (God be kind to him) opines that it refers to those vows which are fulfilled for God's sake (for example a man makes the vow of fasts, or that of 'Itikaf or that of voluntary prayer).

'Ikrama (may Allah be pleased with him) states that these vows refer to the duty of thanksgiving to the Lord.

It has been reported on the authority of Ibn

'Abbas that a man once came to the presence of the Holy Prophet and submitted, "I had taken a vow that I would slaughter myself for the sake of God." The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was pre-occupied and could not pay attention to what the man had said. This man took the silence of the Holy Prophet to mean that he had the Prophet's permission to fulfil his vow. So having made this submission to the Holy Prophet, the man got up, carried himself to a distance and prepared to slaughter himself. When it came to the notice of the Holy Prophet, he observed: "Thanks be to God that He has raised such persons among my people who are very particular about fulfilling their vows." Thereafter the Holy Prophet forbade the man from slaughtering himself and observed to him, "You should slaughter one hundred camels in the name of God in recompense of your own life." (This is so because it is unlawful to slaughter oneself and the compensation for life according to blood-wit is one hundred camels).

(3) The feeding of prisoners as mentioned in the holy verses refers to infidel prisoners, for in those days there were only infidel prisoners. There were no Muslim captives then. When feeding of non-believing prisoners is a deed worthy of the favour of God, the feeding of Muslim captives becomes a deed of even greater nobility.

Mujahid (may Allah be pleased with him). says : "When the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) brought the prisoners of war (who were infidels) from Badr, seven personages from among the venerable companions Hadrat Abu Bakr, 'Umar,

'Ali, 'Abdur Rahman, Sa'd, Abu 'Ubaida (God bless them all) especially expended large sums of money on them." Upon this the Ansar objected : "We fought against them in the way of Allah and you are spending lots of money on them." On this occasion God in Heaven revealed nineteen verses in commendation of these personages. Hadrat Hassan reports that at the time when these verses were revealed, the prisoners were non-believers.

Hadrat Qatada says : "When the Almighty Lord hath sent forth a command in these verses to do favour to the prisoners, although the prisoners were non-believers in that case the Muslim prisoners have even greater right on your favour." Says Ibn Juraij (may Allah be pleased with him) : "In those days there were no Muslim captives. This verse was revealed in connection with the infidel prisoners. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) urged people to do favours to the prisoners." Abu Razin (may Allah be pleased with him) reports, "I was with Shaqiq b. Salama (may Allah be pleased with him) when some infidel prisoners passed by us. Shaqiq urged me to donate something for them and recited this verse : "We neither wish for rewards nor thanks in return for this," which means to say that these personages did not care for receiving compensation in this world for their favour. They wanted to gain all kinds of rewards in the next world.

(4) It has been reported that it was the usual practice with Hadrat Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) and Hadrat Umm Salama (may Allah be pleased with her) that whenever they sent something

in charity to some needy destitute person, they used to instruct the carrier to overhear what the recipient of charity uttered in praise of the donors. When the carrier returned and reported that the recipients had prayed for them to the Almighty God, they used to bless the beggars in the same terms. And they used to say : "We are returning their blessings in this world so that the balance of our true recompense may remain due to us in the world to come."

The same usual practice has been reported about Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) and his son Hadrat 'Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him).

Hadrat Zainul 'Abidin observes, "He who waits for a supplicant in order to spend his money, he is not a generous man at all. The really generous is he who fulfils God's obligations by himself carrying the dues of the needy to them and does not expect any thanks in return for his favours in order that he may repose complete trust in the Favour of Almighty God.

(5) "The bunches of heavenly fruit shall be at their disposal. This statement means that they will obey their wishes. Hadrat Bara 'Aizb (may Allah be pleased with him) says : "The inmates of Paradise will be able to eat the fruits of Paradise in whatever posture they like: standing, sitting or reclining." Mujahid (may Allah be pleased with him) says : "When the heavenly people are in a standing posture, the bunches of fruit will come up to their height; when they are in a sitting position, the bunches will bend low and when they are lying down the bunches will bend lower." According to a second tradition reported by

him it is stated that the land in Heaven is made of silver; its soil is musk; the roots of its trees are made of gold; their branches and leaves are made of pearls and precious stones and amongst these hang the fruits. Should the Heavenly people wish to eat the fruits while standing, they will experience no inconvenience. Should they wish to eat them while sitting or lying down, the branches will bend low to suit their convenience.

(6) The meaning of silver mirror-glasses is this that they will be made of silver, but they will be unlike the mirror-glass. Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) observes : "In this world if you take silver and batter it to the thinness of the wing of a fly, even then this thinnest sheet of silver will not become transparent and water could not be seen through this sheet; but the drinking cups in Heaven, even though they will be made of silver, will be transparent like mirror-glass."

A second tradition relates : "This world is a prototype of everything in Heaven. But there is no prototype of such silver drinking cups in this world." Says Qatada (may Allah be pleased with him) : "Even if all the people in the world join together and try to make a silver vessel transparent like glass, they cannot succeed."

Paradise and its Blessings

Every comfort and delight in this world is a prototype of the comforts and delights of Heaven. Over and above this in the next world there are such blessings that are unheard of, and unimagined by any

man. Paradise contains one hundred levels where there are palaces of gold and silver. Similarly the distress and hardship of the world is a foretaste of the punishments in Hell and in addition to that there are such multifarious tortures which are beyond comprehension. In other words all the pains of Hell issue forth from the Wrath of God upon the evil doers and the delights of Heaven issue forth from the Favour of the Almighty upon the pious people. A person who will offer thanks for things lawful in this world will receive in return such blessings in Heaven that worldly delights are far inferior to them in comparison. And he who will make use of unlawful things, he will deprive his soul from the rewards of Heaven; and he who will not believe in the inevitability of Doom, he shall deprive his soul of all delights of Heaven. There will be three kinds of dinner parties for the people of Heaven; some wedding banquets; some feasts in celebration of the consummation of marriages and some friendly hospitalities. Wedding feasts will be those feasts to which the Almighty shall invite all people of Paradise into the Dar-as-Salam, so that their bodies may be invigorated and their ages may be made immortal. The nuptial banquets will be in celebration of consummation of marriages with the women of Paradise and hospitable entertainments will be given on the occasion of meetings, for the people of Paradise will often meet each other.

In that abode of love there will be meeting-places for mutual conversation. There will be an assembly of the people of Heaven outside 'Taba', where they shall have an occasion to see and meet the prophets.

Meetings of angels will also be held. During the course of prayers God shall also grant gifts (to the heavenly people). All kinds of foods and drinks and fruits shall be provided morning and evening. Their appointed subsistence shall continue to be supplied to them and Allah shall increase their portion every day. They shall have recreation spots in Gardens on the banks of the stream of Paradise which they will frequently visit. There will be tents of pearls pitched on the banks of the stream of Heaven. Each tent will be made of one pearl only; its length and breadth will measure 60 miles on each side. The tent will have no door. Inside the tents there will be perfumed slave-girls; neither an angel nor any man would have seen them. There will be superior women of great beauty inside the tents too. When the Lord God Himself has called them beautiful, what mortal can describe their beauty then? Concerning them God has affirmed: "There shall be Houris inside the tents, protected, in other words, protected from the glance or touch of every man or woman who shall keep their gaze low, and the only objects of their glances shall be their husbands. These women shall be the chosen ones of God. In each case God has chosen only the beautiful faces. They shall be born through a showering of blessings. The blessed clouds shall shower down pretty damsels by the Will of God. Their radiant faces will compare well with the light of Heaven. For them tents of pearls shall be erected. Ever since God hath created them, no one has seen them. Hence they shall live protected in these tents awaiting their lawful husbands. The people of

Heaven shall enjoy peace and comfort along with their wives in their palaces and they shall enjoy these favours so long as God wills them to do so. When, according to the Will of God, the day of renewal of delights and favour will come, they shall be called unto the various levels of Paradise." This is the day of cheerful merriment, care free entertainment, strolling and a day of beautification. Go out towards your recreation spots. The heavenly people shall mount horses made of pearls and emerlads and set out of the gates of their city towards the plains. Riding across the plains they shall reach the Gardens which are situated on the stream of Paradise. God shall point to them the way to their pleasure spots. Each man will dismount near his tent. The tent shall have no door. At that time, however, the tent shall burst open to make a door for the faithful friend of God, so that he may know that the woman inside the tent has not been seen by anybody before. This will be the fulfilment of the promise that Allah had held out in this world, *i.e.* that before these heavenly people no other person or jinn would have touched their Houris. The heavenly people shall recline with the Houris on the thrones of pleasure, their beds; and the banquet in celebration of their marriages will be set before them. When they will have taken their meals, the Lord shall give them the purest nectar to drink and they (the heavenly persons) will enjoy fresh fruits with which God shall bless them.

God shall also award them ornaments and dresses to put on. They shall frolic with their pretty spouses and shall satisfy their need in mating with them.

They will then come to their colourful, decorated sitting places located in Gardens on the banks of streams. They shall arrive there and be seated on soft, green, padded cushions and relcine against them. When the heavenly people will have seated themselves on soft couches, Haḍrat Israfil shall start singing a song. There is none having more melodious voice amongst God's Angels than Haḍrat Israfil. When Haḍrat Israfil will start his song all people living on seven heavens shall cease their prayers and repetition of God's name. Haḍrat Israfil shall sing a variety of melodious songs in praise of God's Holy and Exalted Name. In the course of his song every fruit tree or flower plant, even curtain and gate of Heaven shall open and resound with Haḍrat Israfil's melodious voice.

Each bolt and chain of the door shall start sounding in multifarious tunes. When the sound waves of Haḍrat Israfil reach the grooves of golden and silver bushes, many kinds of cascades will issue forth from them. On that occasion each Houri in her own strain and each bird in its own voice shall start singing. The Lord shall command the angels, "Answer thou their call and sing songs to those of my people who had saved their ears in the world from hearing the tunes of Devil's instruments." In obedience to this command the angels shall sing sacred songs and tunes and all voices shall join in a chorus to produce a resounding effect. At that moment God shall command : "Dawud ! arise ! stand on the edge of the Empyrean and give a discourse on my Exaltedness." Hadrat Dawud shall

discourse upon the Exaltedness and Praise of the Lord in such a way that his voice shall overcome all other sounds and everything shall become clear and beautified. At that time the pleasure shall be doubled and continue to increase ; and the inmates of tents will be seated on their sofas surrounded by delights of all kinds and colours and singing and music.

Some Accounts of Conversation in the Meetings of the Inmates of Paradise

It is affirmed in Surah *Safat* :

"For when they shall meet in company they shall turn towards one another and talk among themselves. One of them shall relate : "I knew a man in the world who often met me and used to ask me in astonishment : "Do you believe in the Day of Judgment ? After our death when we are reduced to earth and bones, will we be recompensed for our deeds?" Thereafter that inmate of Paradise will say to his companions in the assembly : "Would you like to have a peep at him in Hell ?" Then the inmate of Paradise will himself peep into the Hell and shall observe his visitor in the world amidst Hell-Fire." Haḍrat 'Abdullah b. 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) has stated : There shall be balconies in Heaven like ventilators for letting in light. The people of Heaven shall look through them at the people of Hell and the heavenly man upon seeing his visitor in the world amidst Hell-Fire will say to him : "I swear by God, you were about to ruin me. If the blessing of the Lord had not saved me, I would have been (like thee) among those condemned to Hell." The conversation

among the inmates of Paradise has been thus reported in Surah *Tur* : "And they shall turn to one another and converse among themselves and they shall observe, "Before this when we lived in our worldly homes we felt much concerned about the consequences of our deeds and our fate in the Eternal world. The Lord hath done us a great favour and hath saved us from the torture of Hell. We used to pray this. Indeed He is the Most Kind and Compassionate Lord."

Their salvations would be "Let there be peace upon you." It is observed in Surah *Yunus* : Verily those who believed and performed good deeds, the Almighty shall grant them their goal (admittance into Paradise) on account of their faith in Him. They shall reside in luxurious gardens full of comfort, beneath which shall flow canals. And when they shall be admitted into Heaven the wonders of Paradise will suddenly come into their view and they shall exclaim : "Praise be to God ! What blessings ! And what a beautiful place !" Thereafter upon seeing each other in Paradise they shall exchange greetings, and when they have seated themselves in perfect ease, they will compare their former (worldly hardships and painfull conditions with their present pure Eternal delight, then their last utterance at that moment will be "God only be praised for He is the Creator and the Sustainer of the whole Universe."

The explanation of this verse which is implied in its translation is the one offered by the author of *Biyan-ul-Qur'an*. And the author of *Ma'lim-ul-Tanzil* writes in explanation of this verse, "When the people of Heaven will wish to eat they will say : "Glory be to

Thee, O Allah. Upon hearing this utterance, their servants shall set the foods on the dinner cloth. When they will have eaten, they will say 'Praise be to God, Lord of the whole universe'." And in explanation of their greeting "peace!" the same writer has stated : "The inmates of Paradise shall exchange greetings upon meeting each other," and he has reported this observation also ; the Angels shall offer greetings to the people of Paradise and he has also quoted the following observation : "The angels shall come to them bearing greetings from God." And their salvation can actually be explained in all the three ways. The commentator of the Holy Qur'an Ibn Kathir quotes this from Ibn Juraij : When a bird flies past the heavenly people, they will utter : "Glory be to Thee O Lord." Presently the angels shall bring to them the bird of their desire and shall greet them and the heavenly people will reciprocate the greetings of the angels. This is what has been described in the verse. "Congratulations and the tidings of peace and bliss" in Paradise.

When they have finished the meal, they will say : Praise be to the Lord ; which fact has been mentioned in the verse. "The last banquet would be the words, Let there be praise to Allah, the Lord of the worlds." After this Ibn-i-Kathir writes : Sufyan Thauri (may Allah be pleased with him) has observed that whenever the inmates of Paradise will want to have something brought to them they will only say : "Glory be to Thee, O Allah." And the desired thing shall be presented to them." This means that in his commentary, on this verse the 'bird' has been

used only symbolically ; otherwise for all desired blessings, the people of Heaven say, "Glory be to thee, O Allah". Concerning his saying that an angel will bring a bird and present it to the inmate of Paradise, it seems that this perhaps will be only an occasional matter ; for it has been mentioned in earlier traditions that the bird will of itself descend in front of the people living in Paradise.

Full Particulars in Respect of the Blessings of Heaven and their Nature cannot be Comprehended in this World

Whatever we learn and understand about the things of Heaven by listening or reading about them is far less than the actual ; in reality, when we go into Heaven, we shall find those things loftier and of much greater magnitude than we had imagined. This will be so because, in the first place, there will be many more blessings in Paradise in addition to those which have been mentioned in the Qur'an and Hadith. Secondly, because full knowledge regarding a blessing can only be gained through vision and enjoyment, and not from only hearing about it. Hence in this world one cannot fully comprehend the reality and the delight of the bounties of Paradise. According to a tradition reported by Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him), the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "The Magnificent Lord says: I have prepared for My pious people things unseen and unheard of and things which are beyond the comprehension of man". Thereafter the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah

be upon him) said : "Wouldst thou confirm what I have said? Read this verse from the Holy Qur'an : So no soul knows what refreshment of the eye is hidden for them." (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

A tradition in Muslim states : The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) discoursed upon the above subject and observed in conclusion which means to say that there are many more blessings in addition to those which the Lord has already intimated through the verses of the Holy Qur'an and through the observations made by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

A tradition reported by Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) states : "The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "The area in Heaven in which a lash is placed is superior to the world and everything it contains." (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

Moreover, said the Holy Prophet : "The space covered by a half portion of a bow—even that much space in Paradise is better than all things under the sun."

Before a rider dismounts he throws his lash on the ground with a view to occupying the space ; and the pedestrian puts down his bow before he seats himself. The Holy Prophet, in order to bring home the grandeur and high worth of Paradise, stated : "Even so much space which suffices for placing a lash or half portion of a bow—that much space in Paradise is superior to all the length and breadth and spatial vastness of the whole world and with this in view, the vastness of thousands of worlds is far below and much

more inferior in comparison to the whole space of Paradise.

Haḍrat 'Abdullah b. 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) has stated : "There is no worldly thing in Heaven; only the names of the heavenly things and the worldly things resemble each other."

The implication is that the things that have been mentioned as among the blessings of Paradise such as gold, silver, pearls, silk, trees, fruits, thrones, beds, cushions and garments—these things will not be as like the things of this world but will be things of heaven and as such they will have a heavenly quality and character. Nothing in the world can be even remotely compared to things in heaven.

Is there anyone who is making provisions for attaining Paradise?

You have read about the state of Paradise. You have come to know the particnlars about the Blessings in Heaven. You must be yearning to live there. You must have prayed to Almighty God several times to grant you entry into Paradise ; and no doubt it is a necessary attribute of every true Muslim to covet Paradise and to have a burning desire to enter it. But along with this burning desire, this yearning, zeal and eagerness, it is essential that one should make provisions for entry into heaven in the form of pure deeds. One who is desirous of attaining Paradise cannot be devoid of good deeds. Those who are desirous of attaining Paradise and yet are polluted with sins and are indifferent to the task of making provisions of good deeds are indeed fools. As explained by the Holy Qur'an God Almighty has

taken the lives and properties of the pious in pledge for Paradise. Hence it is incumbent upon the pious to abide by the dictates of Shari'ah even at the price of their lives and properties and thus prove themselves worthy of attaining Paradise.

Verily Allah has bought from the believers for their lives and property ; their (in return) is Paradise.

To slumber on while the Muezzin calls for prayer; to sacrifice prayer for worldly business ; to evade the obligation of Zakat ; to skip keeping fasts in the month of Ramaḍan ; to die without performing pilgrimage (when it is obligatory) merely to save money ; to do business without scruples of right or wrong ; to consider expropriation of money belonging to fellow men as the perfection of wisdom ; to consider the study and teaching of the Holy Qur'an and Hadith as an unworthy task ; to harass the old and infirm ; to get work out of the poor without paying them for it ; to consider taking bribes as a lawful right ; to embezzle the capital of the orphans ; and not to distribute the patrimony according to the tenets of Shari'ah; to hesitate from offering prayers to God and to desist from the remembrance of the Almighty and in spite of all this to aspire for the highest ranks in Paradise is the height of foolishness. To attain the highest rank in Heaven one has to keep passions under control. The pain that the soul has to suffer in the performance of the tenets of Shari'ah has to be borne. It has been affirmed in the Holy traditions: "Hell is surrounded by desires and Paradise is encircled by hardships and pains."

The inference is that the labour that is expended

in worship and the constraint that the soul has to suffer in remaining faithful to the Almighty and in abstaining from unlawful desires behind all this suffering lie the delights of Paradise. The suffering of hardships is a means to the attainment of Heaven. On the contrary the man who becomes a slave of his passions and adopts an indifferent attitude to the question of what is lawful and what is unlawful—that man's lustful passions and unholy desires will lead him to Hell. It is observed in a tradition : "Cautious indeed is the man who restrains his desires and works to reap benefit after death ; and foolish indeed is the man who runs after carnal desires and hopes for the mercy of God without performing good deeds." (*Tirmidhi*).

He who feels concerned about avoiding Hell and is eager to enter Paradise will not give preference to this world over the Eternal world. And he will not hold dear his life or property in comparison to Heaven. He will consider no number of good deeds as enough and in order to secure a high place in Heaven he will discharge obligations and offer his prayers. In point of fact concern for the Hereafter has gone out of the minds of people. It is the height of foolishness to neglect devotion and prayer to the Almighty even after faith in such a matchless and unique world as Paradise has been established.

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "I have not beheld a thing like Hell : the one escaping its tortures wastes away his time in sleep. In the like manner I have not beheld as alluring and delightful a place as Paradise

and (strange it is!) that the supplicant for Paradise should lie in indolent slumber." (*Tirmidhi*).

The explanation is that it is ironical that a man who is convinced of the tortures and hardships of Hell should continue to perform Hellish deeds and the man desirous of Heaven should lie in indolent slumber neglecting all care for performing good deeds. This is a matter of great irony indeed. Admittedly there are people in the world who suffer hardship due to indolence and live in want of those things which they desire most. But the most ironical situation of all is that he who would avoid Hell should lie in slumber and he who would rather go to heaven should pass his life in indolence. Worldly life is a journey whose last post (for the pious) is Heaven. But hard labour is a pre-requisite for entry into Heaven ; for the better and finer the thing, the costlier it is.

The Holy tradition affirms : "The person who is confronted with the long distance and hardship of his journey sets out early at the fall of night and he who starts his journey early at the fall of night succeeds in reaching his destination. Beware God's bargains are costly ; Beware God's bargain is Paradise (whose buyers are the servants of Allah).

When under the stress of worldly needs people have to travel, they set out early—nay they sacrifice all ease and comfort and arrive at their destinations exactly on time even before time. He who would travel on the road to Eternity should draw a lesson from this. He should make his journey secure and ensure the success of his travels by scrupulously observing the commands of Shari'at rather than yielding to

the demands of his passion, in order not to miss striking this costly bargain the achievement of Paradise.

What large amounts are spent on buying provisions for this world and on building houses and places of business. How many youths are spent in worldly affairs and how many healthy and sturdy men go into ruin for the sake of worldly achievements. What stupendous endeavours are made to take a woman into matrimony and what large sums are expended! When for the sake of this humble world wealth and costly goods, health and youth are going into ruin and great struggles are going on despite the fact that this world is mortal and people must depart from it one day ; considering all this there is much more need for the sacrifice of life and goods and for expending energy and labour in order to enter the immortal world of Paradise and to achieve its blessings and delights.

Verse :

To lie in sloth is not for thee ;
Beware Heaven bears no little price ;
World is but a passage—way ;
It is not an abode for thee to make merry and forget thyself.

Those Who Make the World Like Unto Heaven : Observe Thou the Condition of Thy Father's Heaven

There were two kings of the people of 'Ad : Shadid and Shaddad. Their capital lay near Aden in the country of Yemen. These two kings reigned over the entire earth. They had the largest armies and possessed treasures without limit. But after the death

of Shadid the reigns of government were taken over by Shaddad and he ascended the throne. On assuming control of Government Shaddad brought about further improvements and his Government attained the highest glory

Such was his power that nc one among all kings and rulers of the world could dare rise against him. On the basis of this pomp and glory Shaddad claimed that he was Almighty God. On this occasion the learned and the sages of the age remonstrated with him and tried to dissuade him from putting forth the claim of being God. The savants told him : "Fear the Almighty ; worship Him, His worship will bring you such blessings." This wretch retorted, "I possess all the wealth and grandeur, I possess all the power of state and command the highest respect and veneration. What more can I get from worshipping this God of yours. When a man binds himself as a slave unto another being, he does so for two reasons (1) to obtain promotion in his position (2) or to gain more wealth, and you know well enough that there is no higher position in the world than the one that I hold to-day and no one in the world possesses more wealth than I have. Then such being my pomp and power what need have I to obey, to be servile and to be subservient to somebody else ?"

The learned admonished, "This kingdom, wealth and rule are transitory. All are subject to decline. None of these shall remain with thee for ever. If thou should worship the true God, you shall be rewarded with the eternal Paradise in return and this eternal Paradise is superior to all worldly rule and riches."

Upon hearing this Shaddad engaged in the following dialogue with the sages.

Shaddad : What things will this Heaven hold ? In reply the learned sages described before him all the praises and attributes of Heaven that they had heard from the Holy Prophets of God. They mentioned the nature of heavenly trees, the streams of Paradise, the buildings and the attributes of the women of Paradise. In effect they told Shaddad in detail everything that they knew about Heaven, upon hearing these details Shaddad exclaimed : "Bah ! I thought Paradise would be an unimaginable place. If such is the Paradise of your God, I have no use for it, because I can build such a Paradise in my realm." The sages stopped further argument upon hearing such absurd talk and came to the conclusion that Shaddad was incorrigible. Hence further remonstrance with him was unnecessary and useless. The sages therefore returned home and Shaddad launched the scheme of raising himself to the level of Almighty God.

The Ordinance to Prepare a Paradise

Shaddad appointed to this task a hundred men from among his nobles and employed one thousand men to serve under each chief. He, in fact, established a new department for the preparation of a Paradise. The number of workers employed in this department was above one hundred thousand men. One officer was made incharge of supply work; another one was responsible for preparing designs, maps and engineering works ; yet another officer was entrusted with the preparation of accounts. Royal decrees were

despatched to every province and to all countries of the world that all available gold and silver should be moulded into multi-coloured bricks and sent to the capital of the realm. He further sent orders that gold, silver and jewels laying in the treasuries should be taken out and despatched to the capital on receipt of orders. He issued ordinance to the department of works to acquire a land area measuring forty square miles near the Aden mountain and upon this land area the foundations of Paradise be laid. The foundations should be dug deep to the subterranean water level and they should be filled up with the stone from the Koh-i-Suleman. When the foundations have been filled and raised to the ground level, brick-work then should be executed in such a way that alternate bricks of gold and silver should be laid one upon the other. The construction work was started according to the wishes of Shaddad. Foundations were laid ; the walls were erected with bricks of gold and silver and the walls were raised to the height of 500 yards, according to the measure of those days. The walls were so bright and beautiful that when the sun rose, eyes could not stand the glare of the walls. A thousand palaces were raised within this enclosure. In each palace there were a thousand pillars, and each pillar was studded with jewels. A canal was excavated within this enclsoure. In each palace, ponds and cascades were built. From the main canal issued forth many streams which flowed beneath each palace, so that fountains may continuously play in each palace and ponds and cascades may always be filled with water. The beds of these canals were overlaid with rubies, sapphires, precious

stones and gems. Artificial trees were grown on the banks of those streams whose roots were made of gold; their branches and leaves were of saphire ; and they were laden with flowers and fruits made from pure gems and red rubies. A compound of musk, saffron, and rose water was sprinkled on the walls and the storehouses and they were enamelled with gold water. Beautiful and sweet singing birds were let loose in this Paradise. Around this Paradise there were one thousand raised platforms made with gold and silver upon which sat the guards who did their duty turn by turn. When this Paradise had been prepared, it was ordained that the entire space of Heaven be coverd with carpet, silk and velvet flooring. Gold and silver cups and utensils may be arranged in all abodes. Furthermore it was decreed that one stream should be filled with sweet waters ; wine should flow in another canal; milk should flow in some other steam ; and yet another canal be filled with honey. The bazars and markets should be decorated with draperies of silken and velvet cloth. Each professional man was commanded to engage in this occupation and was given free choice to do anything according to his will. Shaddad sent forth an edict to all parts of his realm that the choicest seasonal fruits and a variety of fine foods be continuously despatched to this Paradise from all places. In point of fact over one hundred thousand men prepared this grand and resplendent paradise in a period of three hundred years. When it had been prepared Shaddad commanded the nobles of his government, the ministers and high lords as well as the rich men of his realm to come and live with all

their pomp and glory in his paradise. Shaddad himself set out from his capital at the head of his army with a show of all his power and pride to take residence in this paradise. He took along with him those sages also who used to allure him to God's Paradise and who used to admonish him for his impudence and evil talk. On the way Shaddad said to these sages : "Didst thou teach me to bow and humble myself before someone else for the sake of attaining Paradise ? And you shall know my power and my independence from your God soon enough." Shaddad approached his heaven with all this pomp and glory. The residents of this paradise came out to offer him welcome. They showered gold, silver and jewels upon him. They presented to him gifts of various kinds. Shaddad was approaching his paradise with this pride and glory and when he came to the door of heaven millions upon millions of onlookers followed him. Shaddad's carriage preceded them. Bands were playing music and the sound of the flute was creating a spell. Shaddad's face was blooming like a flower with the glow of happiness. But with all this pomp and show, with all the pride and glory as soon as Shaddad stepped upon the threshold of the gate of his paradise, a horrid roar descended from the sky and all the processionists fell dead. Shaddad himself fainted and fell from his horse upon hearing this terrific roaring sound. He died at the age of 900 years with a millions of desires still fluttering in his breast. All those numberless yearnings of his heart to see his heaven died with him. His million desires and billion yearnings were buried with him in the dust. He met such a sorrowful

end that when by the command of God, Izrail was extracting his soul from his body, the angel's heart was heavy with sadness and his eyes were filled with tears. Once upon a time Haḍrat Izrail, submitted to Almighty God : "I never felt pity for anyone when extracting his soul from his body ; but I did feel sad when I was putting an end to the lives of two personages. Had it not been in obedience to Your command, I might never have extracted their souls. In one instance I took pity upon the child whose mother lay on the board of a boat and the child was with his mother. On that occasion You commanded me to take the life of the mother and I felt great compassion as to who would look after the child ?

In the second instance there was a king who got prepared a unique paradise with great eagerness and numberless yearnings, and when that heaven had been prepared and the king came to see it and as soon as the king stepped into the gate You commanded me to take his soul there and then. On that occasion I felt g ,at compassion for only You know how many desires of that king remained unfulfilled." The Most Just Lord observed in reply : "The king was the same boy whom we reared without the aid of any father or mother and raised him to the position of a king. Hence Izrail ! from amongst all creatures you felt pity for Shaddad only on both occasions." (Commentary *Fateh-ul-'Aziz*).

THE IMPACT
OF
MORAL OFFENCES ON FAITH

Remember !

The mothers, who swing in ecstasy to the beat of drum, to the tune of orchestra, to the wailing notes of the fiddle, to the clinking of tinkles, to the melodies of songstresses, cannot deliver Tariq bin Ziad, Muhammad bin Qasim or Khalid bin Walid. On the contrary, they give birth to wicked people only.

KHAWAJA MUHAMMAD ISLAM

THE IMPACT OF MORAL OFFENCES ON FAITH

Manifestation of Reality

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.
Praise be to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. . . .

About 1375 years ago, when like to-day, the world was in the clutches of Dark heathenism, obscurantism, ignorance and ignominy, there emerged from the rocky hills of Batha the luminary of virtue and guidance who illumined the East and the West, the North and the South, in short, every nook and corner of the world and, in a brief period of 23 years, elevated mankind to the zenith of progress, the parallel of which the history of the world cannot produce ; and committed to the hands of the Muslims that torch of virtue and guidance in the light of which they always marched on the path of advancement and ruled the world for centuries with such grandeur and majesty that every conflicting power was shattered to pieces. The above is an undeniable fact, nevertheless, it is a

narrative of yore, the frequent repetition of which is not proper, neither useful nor of much avail, while the present events and observations are stamping ugly stains on our own past life and the deeds of our ancestors. When the life of the Muslims spread over thirteen centuries, is viewed in the historical perspective, it appears that in honour and greatness, prestige and splendour, impressiveness and dignity, we stand alone and pre-dominant. But when we take our glance off the pages of history to observe the events of to-day we discover that we are in the claws of extreme ignominy, indignity, esurience and destitution. We have lost the brawn and muscle and are denuded of all grandeur and majesty. The feelings of fraternity and mutual love are missing.

The Impact of Moral Offences on Faith

Neither our habits are good nor are our morals. Neither our character is commendable nor is our conduct. We have every vice in us and we are miles away from every virtue. To-day, when our condition has gone from bad to worse and the future looks more perilous and more sombre, our sitting quiet and not making a practical struggle is an unpardonable offence. Even otherwise, renouncing the most important duty of doing the things enjoined upon us and avoiding the things forbidden by God is courting the curse and wrath of God Who is Unique and One. And insistence on the decreed acts and refraining from the prohibited things such a strong and indispensable pillar of the religion that all the postulates of religion are attached to it. It is for the performance of this that God, the

Pure and Clean, sent His revered prophets to this world. If, God forbids, this is shelved and its knowledge and practice are forsaken, then honesty that is an attribute of human gentility shall wear out and atrophy, torpor and sluggishness shall become common and popular. The roads to warp and paganism shall be thrown open. Ignorance shall become universal. All the things shall get upset. Disunity shall pervade the nation. Populations shall meet disaster. The creatures shall be utterly ruined and annihilated and we will come to know of this when on the Day of Judgement we will be produced before God, the Supreme and Lofty, and our worldly conduct shall be called to question. It is a pity that the apprehensions have materialized and the hazard is facing us. The vestiges of the knowledge and practice of this evergreen and prosperous pillar have been erased. The blessings of its truth and formalities (practices) are dismantled. Our hearts are preyed upon by the contempt shown and slights inflicted by the opponents. The soul's connection with God, the Pure and Clean, is sundered and in the pursuit of evil desires we have become audacious like dogs. It is not only difficult but well nigh impossible to spot out a true Momin who would put up with the censure of anybody for stating the truth. If there is a brave Momin who endeavours to make amends for this destruction and devastation and makes efforts to revive this tradition and who stands up to shoulder this virtuous responsibility and turns up his sleeves and jumps into the arena to resurrect this tradition, or rectitude, then, surely, that person shall achieve a prominent and distinguished status in the world.

Morals and the Holy Qur'an

No doubt the Exalted Allah has ordained you to do justice, to oblige and to give to your relations and has forbidden you from indulging in obscenities and indecencies. The Exalted Allah admonishes you so that you may take heed. (*Al-Qur'an*).

In the above "verse" enjoining upon us to do good ; to deal with justice, to perform the obligation of (benefaction) helping the relations and forbidding evil in the shape of obscenities, indecencies and cruelty, the three moral goods and the moral evils have been pointed out which can be made the foundation of morality and immorality. So save and preserve the moral superiority, sticking to the enjoined good and avoiding the forbidden acts is very necessary. And, these are linked with the human rights. But, belief in the excellence of performing the human rights and the feeling of loss arising from not performing them both are impossible without having unshakable faith in the Exalted Allah. There is a saying of Hadrat Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani which amply throws light on this explanation. The saying is, "Attach your self to the Creator (Truth) in such a way that His creations do not stand in your way and have relations with His creation in such a manner that your self does not come in between."

It is for this moral instruction that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was sent to this world as the Great Creation so that he raises good morals to the extreme heights. That is why his moral conduct was the practical expression of complete Qur'an to which fact the Qur'an itself

bears testimony. Having faith in the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) means that by following him completely one's life becomes a model of obedience to Allah and both the human and Divine rights are fully performed. Ignoring these two rights at any time is bound to weaken the faith in the Oneness of Allah and the Prophet ; because in Islam, observing every moral good and avoiding all evil acts is necessary not because there may be some implication in it, but, because the Exalted Allah and His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) have ordained to do so, which fact must have some implied good. So, if we avoid lying and adopt truth, we do so only because we are responsible for doing so according to the Holy Qur'an....."And stay away from the untrue things." (*Al-Qur'an*), even if there appears to be some benefit in it and there may be a risk of loss in telling the truth.

The Impact of Offences

How immoralities influence the faith has been explained bv Hadrat 'Ali. "In the beginning faith appears in the heart as a thin white spot and just as the faith progresses the white spot keeps spreading and when the Faith becomes complete, the heart is fully enlightened. And hypocrisy appears as a black spot and its blackness continues to grow deeper and deeper and when the man becomes a complete hypocrite, the whole heart becomes dark and black and a person starts committing offences.

The following tradition of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) also reveals the same

sense. The tradition is, "when a lewd person commits adultery, he does not remain a Momin at that time A thief ceases to be a Momin at the time of theft and a drunkard is not a Momin at the time of drinking." (*Bukhari and Muslim*). So at the time of indulging in adultery, sodomy, stealing, drinking, giving up prayers and violation of such other religious commands and committing the major sins, he is divorced from the faith and after the commission of an offence he can only find himself in one of the two situations—either being ashamed at the unintentional commission of the lowly moral offences, he may sincerely pray to the Exalted Allah for a pardon. In that case faith returns to him. And if he begins liking it, his heart hardens and he forgets his Allah and his religion and low moral offences and evil desires control his heart and he gets used to doing it. And, if for any reason, he cannot do it, he starts grumbling. And, ignoring the fear of Allah Who declared it to be wrong and forbade it, gets busy with efforts for having it. In that case, his faith does not return to him and, when he dies in that state, he is condemned to Hell for ever.

In other traditions on this subject, it is said, "When a person commits adultery, his faith leaves him and hangs on him like a shadow and when he stops it, the Faith returns to him." (*Abu Dawud*). On this point, there is another tradition, "No doubt Faith is like a dress. Allah gives it to any person whom He likes. So, when a person is involved in adultery, the dress of Faith is removed and if he repents of that act, the dress of Faith comes back to him again." (*Baihaqi*).

Method of Repentance

The above two traditions make it clear that during the commission of the offence, the Faith leaves the offender and does not return to him till he repents of the offence. If that offence concerns non-performance of divine rights, like drinking wine and giving up duties, the method of repenting for them is that the offender completely abstains from the forbidden things and resolves that he would not turn to them again. And if the offence concerns the human rights, the method (way) of repentance is that either the usurped rights are restored (given back) to the person concerned or a pardon is begged of the persons concerned.

But this way of repentance cannot be confirmed in the case of the offence of rape (violation of chastity), because if a person has raped the wife of another person, it does not look proper that he should approach the person concerned in that connection and similarly it is not wise that the offender begs pardon of the person concerned. The mention of such an offence is not at all necessary and it will be enough to have the mere intention of this at the time of begging pardon. But if the offender wishes to purify his soul by confessing and undergoing the prescribed punishment of adultery, then there is no need to beg pardon of the woman's husband, but he may only confess his offence before the punishing authority.

Sin and Punishment

On the above subject there is another opinion according to which moral offences in no case deprive a person of the Faith. If the believer in Allah and

His Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) dies soiled with any moral offence, he does not lose the Faith because of that offence, but dies as a sinner and the Exalted Allah's saying, "The Exalted Allah does not forgive a polytheist and apart from him He forgives anyone whom He likes"—(*Al-Qur'an*) does not apply to him.

There are many *ahadith* to confirm what is implied in the above verses and a correct one out of them is that, if the responsible person dies with his faith intact, he shall enter (live) Paradise even if he might have committed theft or adultery. But there is no contradiction in this *hadith* and those which deal with punishing the offenders or the loss of their Faith. As far as the former is concerned, the offender shall be subjected to temporary torture (punishment) for the major sins and he shall not be condemned to Hell for ever like a disbeliever (Heathen or Atheist). It is just possible that the Exalted Allah may forgive the persons who commit moral offences as a reward for any virtuous act of theirs and may not punish them at all.

Then in respect of the matter mentioned last Faith consists of belief in the Oneness of Allah (Monotheism) and the Prophet. And according to this belief the commission of the offence does not mean absence of Faith. And the scholars (the learned persons) say that any person who strongly believes that there is a snake in a certain hole, shall never knowingly dare to put his hand in that hole This is correct, but it does not apply to the matter under discussion, because Allah, the Exalted, has fixed a time for punishing the

offence. And, He says, "Whoever repented of his offence, the effect of his offence is removed and his sins shall be turned into virtues." So, the offence, which is rubbed off after repentance, does not mean absence of faith in the Oneness of Allah (Monotheism) and the reward and punishment. It is so because when a person commits a moral offence, he has at that time faith in Allah who accepts the repentance of His creatures (believers) and pardons their sins. But if a person stands firm without any repenting of his sins for a long time and then dies before repentance, then it depends on the Will of the Exalted Allah to punish him or forgive him.

Negation of Virtuous Acts

In the aforesaid two traditions (*ahadith*) and in the others like these, when it is said that moral offences negate the Faith, it means absence of the Absolute Faith ; in other words it can also be called the negation of virtuous acts (good deeds) and a virtuous act is not the result of the reality of Faith, but is actually a condition for its verification. For example, if a person recited the Declaration of Faith (کلمہ طیبہ), with a sincere heart but never did any virtuous act, then due to the absence of this condition, his faith was not verified, and this remained his act even if it was a minor one. And this is the meaning of the said *ahadith.* That is why the saying of Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), "A person, at the time of committing adultery, does not remain a Momin (Faithful)," has this meaning the Absolute Faith that has the condition of virtuous acts is not verified. The

reason is that adultery is such an immoral offence that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) forbade it. So, the commission of adultery negates the Faith. Other situations may also be considered on this basis and there is a similar saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), "When a person commits adultery, his faith leaves him and hangs on him like a shadow and when he is through with it, the Faith returns to him." Here faith means Absolute Faith which is conditional upon virtuous conduct. There is no conflict between these *ahadith* and the saying of the Exalted Allah, "The Exalted Allah never forgives a polytheist and except him He forgives any person whom He likes." This Qur'anic verse makes it quite clear that the Exalted Allah never forgives a polytheist and the decision on the other major sins depends on His Will. He may forgive the offenders (sinners) or He may punish them. So in the circumstances, if the committer of moral offences dies before repentance, he does not turn infidel, for the very reason that the Exalted Allah warned through the Qur'anic verse that He would not forgive the infidel and reserved the judgment in the case of all other offenders to His own will.

Remission of Offences Against Human Rights

As far as human rights are concerned, although they relate to human beings only, yet the Exalted Allah has the discretion (power) to compensate the owners of the rights, for any injustice or cruelty done to them, with such assets which they might not have even dreamed of. Most of the scholars agree on this point.

In this regard, it should be remembered that the Exalted Allah sent His Messengers (prophets), when necessary, for edifying the mankind and provided them with the Divine Books, and particularized the followers of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) with al-Qur'an in which besides do's and don'ts, admonitions and exhortations and parables, it has been ordained to acquire all virtues and avoid all evils, and for the human beings such laws have been enunciated in which lies the secret of prosperity in this world and blessing in the Hereafter. Those who practise the Faith have been promised everlasting bliss and success, and the offenders and the rebels have been threatened with such severe and painful torture as is beyond human endurance. In some of the Qur'anic verses certain offenders have been held liable to everlasting punishment "Whoever knowingly kills a Momin (Faithful), he shall be condemned to Hell for ever or he shall incur the wrath and curse of Allah."

There is no doubt that whatever the Exalted Allah says is true and He never goes back on His words, while He has the Absolute Will and is Omnipotent. Neither any power or force can forbid Him from forgiving or overlooking or from punishing and torturing nor anything can stand in the way of fulfilling His Will. He is in all respects superior to His creatures. But He has provided reasonable and right means for His creatures to have access to the enlightened ways of achieving virtue and success. After pointing out the consequences of good and bad conduct He made it clear that the way to pardon for the sins in this world is to repent and avoid them. So, the Exalted Allah

said, "Allah does not forgive the polytheist and whatever is below that He forgives whomsoever He likes." (*An-Nisa*).

"Dost thou not know that the Sovereignty of the earth and the heavens is for Allah only. So, He shall forgive whom He likes and shall punish whom He likes. Allah has power over every thing."

But, in spite of these Qur'anic verses who can dare say that he is the only person whom Allah shall forgive and who deserves His pardon and that he shall be forgiven without repentance while the other verses clearly mean, that pardon is reserved only for those who repent sincerely.

The Exalted Allah said : "And those who do not worship any other god along with Allah and do not destroy the soul for which Allah ordained respect and do not commit immoral acts, but whosoever does this shall be punished and on the Day of Judgment torment shall be increased for him and he shall be held in everlasting disgrace. But for those who repent and repose Faith in Him, Allah shall change the evil acts of such persons into virtuous acts" (68-70). "And Lo ! verily I am Forgiving towards him who repenteth and believeth and doeth good and afterwards walketh aright" (*Ta Ha*-82). "Then every soul will be paid in full that which it hath earned." (*Al-Baqarah*-281). "By the fast declining ages, Lo ! man is in a state of loss, save those who believe and perform good acts." (*Al-'Asr*).

There are many other verses of this kind which point towards the fact that man is bound to be rewarded for his good acts and is bound to be punished

for his evil actions, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said, "People shall be recompensed for their acts" good reward for good acts and punishment for bad acts. And the Exalted Allah said, "Whosoever doeth good equal to an atom's weight will see it then, and whosoever doeth ill equal to an atom's weight will see it then." (*Az-Zilzal*). From this it becomes quite clear that the Exalted Allah has imposed on His creatures the duty of believing in the Oneness of God and His Messenger and doing virtuous acts, and if they do not perform their duties fully, then they shall have to undergo torturous punishment for that on the Day of Judgment. If a person does one good act and one bad act, then his good acts do not accumulate with Allah. In that case his one good act balances with one sin committed by him. It is another matter that he, because of his good acts, shall be nearer the forgiveness of the Exalted Allah just as He said, "There are some other people who confessed their misdeeds, who did mixed acts, some good and some bad, so it may be hoped that Allah will show Mercy in their cases." (*Al-Qur'an*).

This Qur'anic verse was revealed about the group of persons who did not join the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) for fighting in the way of Allah and stayed behind, though they were in all manner capable of siding with the Prophet. Later on they admitted their guilt by expressing shame at this lapse and they spent money in the name of Allah to atone for this sin. The Exalted Allah accepted their repentance. Seven persons out of those who did not join the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be

upon him) in the Holy War were so ashamed at their conduct that they chained themselves with the pillars of the mosque. When the Prophet of Allah, (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) returned after the battle, he entered the mosque and said prayers as usual. On observing the chained persons, he inquired about them and was told why they had chained themselves and that they had vowed to keep themselves in that condition till Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) unchained them. At this, the Prophet declared on oath that he shall not unchain them till the Exalted Allah directs him in this respect. Then this Qur'anic verse was revealed :

"That there are some people who confess their guilt, who did mixed acts, some good and some bad. So, it is hoped that Allah will consider their case mercifully. No doubt, the Exalted Allah is the Great Forgiver." (*Al-Qur'an*). After this those persons were untied. No doubt this act of theirs is only an evidence of superficial repentance. Their major sins were wiped off because of this repentance of theirs, because sincere repentance rubs off sins and offences.

But it is noteworthy here that the moral offences like adultery, theft etc. do away with gentleness and courtesy. So it is not in any way proper for the doer of such bad acts to declare his guilt in public, provided he desires the due punishment to purify his soul. So at the time of restoring (giving back) stolen property to the owner it is not at all necessary to say, "I had stolen these goods." On the contrary, it will be enough to say, "Here are your goods that I happened to come across. So, please take them." And same is the case

in respect of all those offences which are committed under cover and in great secrecy. So, it is binding on the offender that if the offence involves violation of divine rights, he should not commit those sins again, and if human rights are violated, he should restore them to their owners or he should beg pardon of them. In short, major sins cannot be rubbed off except by repentance and virtuous conduct. In this connection, what is mentioned in the Holy Qur'an and what has been said or done by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) means that the Exalted Allah will forgive even major sins, provided the offender repents of his offence.

As regards the assertion that the committer of major sins shall, as a disbeliever, deserve Hell for ever, it does not sound correct in the light of the Qur'anic verse, "Whosoever doeth good equal to an atom's weight will see it then, and whosoever doeth ill equal to an atom's weight will see it then." (*Az-Zilzal*). It does not stand to reason that the believer in Allah, His Messengers and His scriptures may be equal to the disbeliever who denies his Creator and practises atheism. So, the disbeliever shall certainly be condemned to the tortures of Hell for ever. But, still one thing, as is mentioned in many reliable *ahadith*, cannot be dismissed that those out of the believers who revolt shall be punished for their bad acts and, when they are reformed, they shall be shifted from Hell to Paradise.

Damages of Moral Offences

As regards the damages that arise out of robbing a person of his honour or property, they do not end

with the punishment only but their harm and their bad results and loss show up through generations and these sins appear later in the shape of legal crimes committed by their offspring. If the persons who commit adultery had realised the fact that their momentary pleasure paved the way for great evil and mischief, they would have deemed it easier to commit suicide than to commit that shameful offence. Especially, when their evil act results in the birth of a baby whom the lewd and wicked woman sometimes chokes to death in the cradle, sometimes gets rid of that proof of the adultery by abortion and sometimes, after giving him birth, throws him away, without a guardian, at the mercy of the world to lead a life of hardship and miseries. The innocent child neither knows his mother who would have given him motherly love nor his father, who would have given him his kind support. And, who is either accidentally thrown into the lap of a person who teaches him (the child) a religion quite different from that of his (the child's) actual parents, or by chance falls into the hands of a person whose bringing up spoils him (the child) morally. And, such a child grows to be a harmful member of the society and becomes a source of trouble for it.

If an adulteress (a woman who commits adultery) is married, then she commits great infidelity and a more shameful sin, because she, by deceiving her husband, adds an extraneous element to his real and genuine children and ultimately this act of hers becomes a cause of misfortune for the whole family. Naturally, the illegitimate child shall walk in the footsteps of his real (adulterer) father and shall follow his (father's)

immoral conduct and shall thus infect the society with the moral disease of adultery.

It is just possible that some evil-doer says that this danger can be avoided by contraceptive (birth control) measures, but such a course shall be worse still and more harmful for the mankind. Because, adoption of these measures would mean destroying with one's own hands the future generations and shall be tantamount to pushing the nation to the verge of extinction and would throw the nation into disgrace and adversity by gradually decreasing its numbers. And it will be a proof of our being ever less wise than the animals because even animals, according to the divine will, for a fixed period, continue procreation. There can be no greater dishonesty than that a person, ignoring all his obligations and duties, dedicates himself to the satisfaction of his animal desires only and he neither understands the object of being gifted with this desire nor knows the result of its abuse, while it is clear that the only object of creating this desire was the preservation of human species. When, in the form of a human being, there is a brute who has neither any care nor respect for humanity he becomes an instrument for the ruin of fellow-beings and in the long run it is through him that the women of his household : his daughters and his whole family are depraved morally because they will also follow his immoral conduct. So, what can be the means of remaining safe from such a devastating menace.

Consequences of Adultery in This World

Both the man and the woman, before committing

the shameful act of adultery should imagine that, if their secret is let out and the father, brother or husband of the adulteress should chance to see her in the process of the commission of the act, then what would happen to both of them? Will their passion and lust survive the thought of disclosure or will their evil intentions weaken and their hearts develop palpitation? Or will their desire for the sexual act disappear as if they never had it? And then, what would happen to the poor husband, the father and brother of the adulteress? Will this immoral sight not make every sacrifice seem easy for the relatives of the adulteress? Most of the people are so greatly provoked by the hateful sight that they, after murdering both the parties to the adultery, insanely commit suicide. And, this has nothing to do with one's duty or luck, but such incidents are of common occurrence among the people.

The Consequences of Adultery in the Hereafter

It is our duty to save the committers of adultery from the torture in the Hereafter. They do not know what humiliation they will face in the Hereafter. They shall have to pay a heavy price for their evil deeds to the persons whose rights they violated. Do they not remember the Day on which the oppressors shall have to account for their cruelty and oppression, and they shall find no friend to help them there? Do they not know that even if they escaped the eye of the people, the Exalted Allah is fully aware of their condition and misdeeds? And, no dubt, He shall not remit violation of even an atom of the human rights,

but those offenders shall be punished for their offences and their good deeds would be debited and credited to the account of those whose rights they usurped. Their account does not have any virtuous acts to their credit. Then they shall have to suffer for the sins of those persons also whose rights they injured in addition to their own, because on the Day of Judgment no one's right shall be wasted, not even the least bit of them.

Adultery and the Individual and Collective Degeneration

When a group is formed of such persons whose hearts become cruel, whose insight is blinded, who lose sense of human rights, who do not feel shy of Allah and who do not care to fear Allah's Day of Judgment, is it not their duty to call to account the activities of their spouses and children? This is so because the Allah's Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said that an adulterer is a bad model for his daughters and family. "Avoid yourself and guard your women." So, when a person does not care for his generation, has no regard for his honour, ignores the ruin of the morals of his women and children and attaches no importance to the ruin of the morals of the children of others, then such persons are degraded lower than the wild asses, monkeys and other animals who assault even their own female offspring. So, when any nation of the world considering it just and proper, indulges in adultery, the signs of the decline and extinction of that nation become visible soon. And, apart from this, they deserve eternal torture due to the Divine wrath. There is no doubt that only this is

quite enough to censure and reprimand one's conscience or self for adultery and there is no need to urge people to guard against the dangerous moral and physical diseases resulting from the mutual intercourse of the adulterers. Nor it is necessary to mention the financial loss and the audacity arising out of the commission of the forbidden acts. We have seen many people who wasted their money and property for the sake of a wicked woman and earned infamy and contempt, and there are also many people whose love for an adulteress grew into a mania and their morality was ruined to such an extent that they became a sort of social cancer.

In spite of the fact that harms of adultery are quite clear, the adulterers neither care for religion, nor understand the greatness of religion, nor do they recognize the religious prohibitions, nor have they any regard or respect for the greatness of Allah Who knows the dishonesty of their eyes. So, they are like the quadrupeds (animals), nay, they are even more strayed.

Adultery and the Islamic Law

It is because of this that the Islamic law has expressed more concern about adultery. So, the Exalted Allah, in the Holy Qur'an, has held adultery to be a shameless act which entails the worst consequences.

"Come not near unto adultery. Lo! it is an abomination and an evil way." (*Bani Israil*-32).

In another place, He said : "And those who cry not unto any other god along with Allah, nor take the life which Allah hath forbidden save in course of

justice, nor commit adultery—and whosoever doeth this shall pay the penalty ; the doom will be doubled for him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein disdained for ever ; save him who repenteth." (*Al-Furqan* 68-70).

In this verse it is clear that taking anyone's life, save in the course of justice, and adultery are among those offences for which the perpetual punishment of Fire (Hell) is prescribed and if the committer of adultery does not repent of his sin, then this rebuke and censure for adultery should be quite enough. And he who thinks that the punishment for adultery is not heavy or difficult because proving adultery for the ends of justice is impossible, should realize that even if he escapes the worldly punishment, it is nothing because on the Day of Resurrection he shall face many times greater and an everlasting doom.

It is because of this, that in the days of the Prophet (when the Prophet was alive) the Momins (believers) preferred the worldly punishment for saving themelves from the eternal doom ordained by Allah on the Day of Resurrection. And, it is these personages who said, "Avoid the evil and base sexual desire that exhausts in a matter of minutes, but the minimum punishment for it is death."

Moral Offences and Islamic Justice

The entire foregoing discussion shows that the object of Islamic jurisprudence is to build a united front against moral offences. Hence in view of the harms of these offences in this world and in the Hereafter and to save the Muslims from them, exemplary

punishments have been prescribed. On the evidence of confession, eye witness or pregnancy, the punishment of pelting with stones and flogging has been fixed for the adulterous male or female. The punishment for the unnatural act of sodomy is in no way less than that for adultery, because this mean act was not done even by dogs, let alone human beings, before the people of Lot initiated it. In the case of theft, it is proved, the punishment of amputating (cutting off) the thief's hand is quite proper, because a thief, in the dark of night or in daylight, steals what others have earned by the sweat of their brows to which he has no right in any way. A drunkard has been equated with an idolator and polytheist.

If somebody is of the opinion that Islam has prescribed excessively severe punishments for moral offences, he should not overlook the fact that the plagin concept of Islamic society is that the life, property and honour of one Muslim shall be secure against violation by another Muslim. And if into such a model society, any element creeps which carries the danger of polluting the whole society, then according to Islam the best way to deal with it is to completely destroy such dirty and undesirable elements in order to save the whole society from its adverse influence. And, to maintain Islamic justice no distinction between rich or poor, high or low, should be made.

This is the Islamic way of guarding the life, property and honour of the people and establishing peace which can even in this worldly life provide a view of the Paradise.

The Companions of the Prophet (peace and bless-

ings of Allah be upon them) asked him, "Shall we be destroyed even when there are righteous people among us ?" The Prophet replied, "Yes, when vice overwhelms." There is a similar tradition that the Exalted Allah directed Haḍrat Gabriel to overthrow a certain colony and he respectfully submitted that a certain person, who had never committed a sin, lived in that colony. The Exalted Allah replied, "That is true, but he saw people disobeying My commands and he took no notice or action. It is the duty of every person, who sees anything improper being done, that he should point it out and challenge it, if he has the power to do so when sins are committed secretly, only the offenders are punished. But when sins are committed publicly and no one stops, then the punishment is inflicted on all without exception. The Prophet said on oath, "You should continue inviting and persuading people to do good deeds and keep advising them and dissuading them from performing evil deeds, and keep asking the cruel not to perpetrate cruelty upon others and keep drawing people to the right things, otherwise your hearts shall also be polluted as are theirs and you will also be cursed like Bani Israel."

A man came to the Prophet and requested his permission for adultery. The Prophet said, "Come near me," and then said : "Do you wish that some man may commit adultery with your mother ?" The man said : "No ! I do not wish that." Then the Prophet said : "Similarly, other people also do not wish that adultery be committed with their mothers." Then the Prophet asked that man, "Would you like that some man should commit adultery with your

daughter ?" The man replied : "No, I would not like that either." Then the Prophet said : "Similarly, other people also do not like that adultery be committed with their daughters." In short, after putting similar questions about that man's sister and aunts, the Prophet put his sacred hand on that man's chest and prayed to Allah : "O Lord forgive the sin of this man and save his genitals from committing sinful act." And, it is said, that the man repented his sin after that incident.

Do not Talk ill Even of an Offender

Abu Huraira says that Ma'az Aslami came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and confessed that he had committed adultery with a woman. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) turned his face away from Aslami four times, but when Aslami confessed the fifth time, the Prophet asked him: "Did you love that woman?" Aslami replied: "Yes, I did." Then the Prophet inquired, "Did you have sexual intercourse with her." Aslami said: "Yes, I did." Then the Prophet again asked him the same question. Aslami gave him the same reply. Then the Prophet questioned, "Do you know what adultery means ?" Aslami said respectfully, "Yes, I committed adultery with that woman just as one makes love with his legal wife." The Prophet asked: "What do you mean by this statement of yours ?" Aslami replied, "I wish that the impurity of this sin may be removed from me." So, the Prophet directed that the man (Aslami) be pelted with stones and he was stoned to death. Later, the Prophet heard two of

his companions talking. One was saying to other, "Look at the man. The Exalted Allah had kept his secret, but he did not give up the wishes of his 'self' till he was stoned to death like a dog." Hearing this, the Prophet kept quiet. A bit later, the Prophet happened to pass by the carcass of a donkey which had a swollen belly. One of its feet was raised up. Seeing that, the Prophet said, "Where are so and so persons." They replied "Here we are." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : "Come here and eat the flesh of this dead donkey." They said : "Who can eat this ?" Then the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : "You have just injured the honour of one of your brothers and it is worse than eating the flesh of this dead donkey. I swear by Allah, on Whose Will my life depends, that the deceased should be at this time swimming in the streams of Paradise". (*Abu Dawud*).

To Present Oneself for the Punishment of Sins

Abu Huraira and Zaid bin Khalid say that two persons who were quarrelling came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). One of them requested the Prophet to decide their dispute according to the Book of God (Holy Qur'an) and requested for the Prophet's permission to state the case. The Prophet granted the permission. Then the man said: "My son worked as a labourer for this man, and he committed adultery with his master's (employer's) wife. The people told me that my son would be stoned to death. I gave one hundred she-goats and a slave-girl in compensation thereof. Then I consulted the

scholars about the problem. They told me that my son shall be punished with one hundred flogs (canes) and shall be exiled for one year and the woman involved shall be stoned to death because she is married."

The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) after hearing this said: "I swear by Allah, at Whose Will my life depends that I shall decide your dispute according to the Book of Allah (Holy Qur'an). Your slave-girl and the she-goats shall be returned to you and your son shall be punished without one hundred flogs and shall be exiled for one year." Then the Prophet said: "Unless you go to that woman and, if she confesses her guilt, stone her to death". The woman confessed and 'Umar stoned her to death. (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) says that the Exalted Allah, sent Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) with Truth and revealed His Book (Holy Qur'an) to him. And among the commands of the Exalted Allah there is a verse relating to the stoning to death of Adulterous persons. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) did pelt stones and after him we have also pelted stones. And the Book of Allah (Holy Qur'an) directs that the unmarried person, man or woman, should be stoned to death when there are witnesses or when there is pregnancy or when there is confession. (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

Punishment for Married and Unmarried Committers of Adultery

'Ubada bin Samit says that the Prophet (peace and

blessings of Allah be upon him) said : "Take orders (directions) from me (about adulterer and adulteress). Yes take from me orders (about them). The Exalted Allah has fixed a procedure for women. If a virgin commits adultery with a bachelor, she should be punished with one hundred flogs and exiled for one year and if a married man commits adultery with a married woman, then both of them should be punished with one hundred flogs each and both should be stoned to death." (*Muslim*)

Stone to Death the Committers of Adultery

'Abdullah bin 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) says that a group of Jews came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said : "A man and a woman of our nation have committed adultery." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked them : "What does the Torah say about pelting stones?" They replied : "We humiliate them and give publicity to their evil act and punish them by flogging." 'Abdullah bin Salaam said : "You are telling a lie. Bring the Torah which also ordains pelting stones." So, they brought the Torah and one of them having covered with his hand the verse relating to the pelting of stones read out the verse preceding it and the one that came after it. 'Abdullah bin Salaam said: "Take off your hand." And, the verse about pelting stones was seen clearly. The Jew said : "'Abdullah bin Salaam is right. The verse about pelting stones is there." Then the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) directed that both the committers of adultery be stoned to death and they met their fate.

Another version of the tradition says that 'Abdullah bin Salaam said : "Take off your hand". When the Jew took off his hand, the direction about pelting stones was there." The Jew, who had covered the stoning command with his hand, said: "Muhammad, the direction for pelting stones is there in the Torah, but we conceal it". The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him directed that both of them (committers of adultery) be stoned to death and so they met their fate. (*Muslim and Bukhari*).

An Incident of Adultery

Abu Huraira says that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was sitting in the mosque when a man came and respectfully said: "I have committed adultery." The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) turned his face away from him. That man again faced the Prophet and said : "I have committed adultery." The Prophet again turned his face away from that man. When the man said the same thing four times and the evidence became conclusive, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked that man to draw near and said to him : "Have you gone mad?" That man replied : "No." Then the Prophet asked: "Are you married?" He said: "Yes, I am." The Prophet said: "Take him away and stone him to death." Ibn Shahab has stated this tradition thus : "I was told by the man who heard it from Jabir bin 'Abdullah that he (Jabir) stoned him (the adulterer) to death. In Madina, when the stones hurt his (adulterer's) body, he ran till I caught him in the rocky tract of Madina and pelted stones at him till he

was dead." (*Muslim and Bukhari*). And, according to Bukhari's version which is credited to Jabir, the tradition is that when that man confessed that he was married, the Prophet directed that he should be stoned to death. So, that man was stoned at in Eidgah. When the stones struck that man's body, he ran and was caught and was stoned at again till he was dead. On his death, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) praised him and said his funeral prayers and so supplicated for him."

Verification of the Incident of Adultery

Buraida says that Ma'iz bin Malik came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said : "Purify me." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : "I pity you. Go back, repent and pray to Allah to forgive you." Ma'iz went away and after covering a short distance returned and said to the Prophet : "Purify me." The Prophet repeated the same words in reply. This happened four times. The fourth time the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked him : "Of what should I purify you?" Ma'iz replied of adultery. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) inquired from the Companions if that man was mad. They said that the man was not mad. Then the Prophet inquired if he was drunk. One of the Companions smelt his mouth and found that he was not drunk. Then the Prophet asked Ma'iz "Have you committed adultery?" Ma'iz replied : "Yes, I have". The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) directed that he should

be stoned to death and Ma'iz was stoned to death. Two or three days passed, but no one talked of the stoning to death of Ma'iz before the Prophet. One day, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came as usual and said : "Pray for the salvation of Ma'iz bin Malik. His repentance is such that, if the reward of that is distributed among all the followers (Muslims), it will be enough for all."

A Woman Presented Herself for the Punishment of Her Sins

A woman, who belonged to Ghamiad a group of Azd clan, came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and said: "Purify me." The Prophet said: "How sad it is. Go back and repent and pray to Allah to forgive you." The woman said : "Do you want to send me away as you did in case of Ma'iz. I am pregnant as a result of adultery." The Prophet inquired, "Are you pregnant?" The woman replied : "Yes, I am." The Prophet said: "Wait till the birth of the child." The writer of the tradition states that one of the helpers (Ansars) provided maintenance to the woman till she gave birth to the child." Then, after some time, the Ansari came to the Prophet and said : "That woman has given birth to a child" The Prophet said: "That woman shall not be stoned to death and the child shall not be left in such a situation, that there is no one to suckle him." An Ansari stood up and said : "I take the responsibility for the suckling of the child." The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) directed that the woman should be stoned to death. And, another tradition is: When that

woman confessed her pregnancy, the Prophet asked that woman to go back and wait till the birth of the child. When the child was born, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked that woman to suckle the child and wait till weaning. When the child was weaned, the woman brought him to the Prophet. The child held in his hand a piece of bread. That woman told the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that she had weaned the child and he had begun eating bread. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) gave the child to a Muslim and ordered that a pit be dug breast-high for the woman and the woman be stoned to death. So, the stoning was started. Khalid bin Walid pelted a stone at the head of that woman and the face of Khalid got splashed with the blood from her head. Khalid uttered a curse upon the woman. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) asked Khalid to keep quiet and further said : "I swear by Allah in Whose Hand is my life that her repentance is such that, if a person, who exhorts tax or decimates others' earnings, repents that much, his cruelty can be forgiven." Then the Prophet directed that her funeral prayers be said and she be buried.

Punishment for the One Who Commits Rape

Wa'il bin Hujr says, "In the days of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) a woman came out with the intention of saying prayers. A man got hold of her, threw a cloth on her and satisfied his sexual urge. The woman cried and the man left her and walked away. A group of

immigrants (refugees) happened to pass by that woman. The woman told them that such and such man had raped her. They caught that man and brought him to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The Prophet said to the woman : "You go home. Allah has forgiven you because you had not consented to the act." And, the Prophet said about the man who had committed the rape, "Take this man away and stone him to death." So, the man was stoned to death. (*Tirmidhi*, *Abu Dawud*).

Punishment for Sodomy

'Ikrama bin 'Abbas says, "The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said that if a person performs sexual act with an animal, then that person and the animal, both should be killed." Ibn 'Abbas was asked as to what was the fault of the animal in that case? He replied, "I did not hear anything from the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) about the animal. But, I think that eating flesh of such an animal or taking any other benefit from that animal (drinking milk of that animal) is loathsome." (*Tirmidhi*, *Ibn Majah*).

Punishment for Adultery and for Accusing Someone of Adultery

Ibn 'Abbas says that a man, belonging to the Bin Bakar bin Lais Clan, came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and confessed that he had committed adultery with a woman four times. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon

him) got him flogged because he was a bachelor. Then the Prophet collected evidence about the woman, who swore by Allah and told the Prophet that the man had told a lie. Then the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) directed punishment of the man for defamation and got him flogged. (*Abu Dawud*).

Sodomist is Cursed

Ibn 'Abbas and Abu Huraira say, "The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said that any person who commits sodomy is the subject of divine curse." According to Razin and Ibn 'Abbas the tradition is, "Ali got both the parties to sodomy (sodomite and catamite) burnt to death and Abu Bakr got a wall pulled down on them." (*Ahmad*).

Punishment for Habitual Thief

Abu Salamah quoting Abu Huraira says, "The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said that when a thief commits a theft, cut off his right hand, and if he commits a theft again, cut off his left foot. It he commits theft a third time, cut off his left hand and if he repeats it for the fourth time, cut off his right foot." (*Sharah-as-Sunnah*).

What to do After Cutting off the Thief's Hand

Fazaalah bin 'Ubaid says, "A thief was brought to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and one of his hands was cut off as directed by the Prophet. Then the Prophet directed that the amputated hand be tied to the neck of the thief so that people may see that and are deterred." (*Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah*).

Punishment of an Apostate

Some men of 'Aql clan came to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and embraced Islam. But the climate of Madina did not suit them. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ordered them to go to the place where the camels (of *Zakat*) were kept and to stay there and to mix the milk and urine of those camels and drink it. So, they did that and got well. Then they renounced Islam, murdered that guards of camels and fled with the camels. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sent men on horses to chase them and they caught the fugitives and brought them to the Prophet. The apostate fugitives' hands and feet were cut off as punishment for their offence and then their eyes were torn out. Then, to stop bleeding from their hands and feet, they were dipped in boiling oil till they were dead. And another tradition is that : "Hot rods were passed into their eyes." There is another version of the tradition saying : The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ordered that rods be heated. When they became hot, they were passed into the eyes of the offenders and then they (offenders) were thrown in the rocky tract of Madina. They (the offenders) asked for water which was denied to them till they died. (*Bukhari and Muslim*)

THE SIGNS OF DOOM

O people, make provision for the Doomsday by performing good deeds, for the time lost will never be regained.

PREFACE

In this book that is in your hands now, those observations of Haḍrat Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) have been collected in which he had foretold the events which were to follow in the times to come. A study of these observations will give the reader some idea of the limited knowledge at the command of the Holy Prophet and the reader will also realise that the signs of the Doomsday which he had indicated can be literally observed in modern times.

This humble one has taken special care to collect such statements of the Holy Prophet which have proved true in the present age or serve as indicators of coming events.

Our non-Muslim brethren will profit by the study of these statements and they will come to believe that the Prophet of Islam was indeed the most exalted one of those beings who had a special connection with the True Lord. For to warn 1300 years beforehand about the evils and misguiding leaders, and the universal calamities and mishaps, and what's more, to express them with such conviction and finality as if these events were happening before his very eyes is the attribute of only that friend of God who was blessed with the Supreme Knowledge by his Lord.

Not a single prediction of the guide of mankind (peace be upon him) has proved untrue till now and how can this be! for he does not speak of his own desire.

THE SIGNS OF THE DOOMSDAY

Those Who will be Visited with Doom

Hafiz Ibn-i-Hajar has alluded to a tradition by Tabrani in *Fath-ul-Bari* in which a picture of extreme shamelessness has been presented. The tradition is translated thus : The Doomsday shall not come until things come to such a pass that a woman shall pass through a crowd of men and one of those men will rise and lift her undergarment (as the tail of a she-lamb is lifted) and engage in copulation with her. Seeing such a happening one of the men will say : "It would have been better if you had engaged in intercourse with her in privacy behind a wall." Then, said the Prophet, such a man will be as virtuous among those people as Abu Bakr and 'Umar are the most righteous among you.

The Followers of Muhammad will Imitate the Deeds of the Jews, Christians and the Magians

Hadrat Abu Sa'id (may Allah bless him) states

that the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "You shall imitate your forerunners' every bit ; you shall follow in their steps inch by inch, *i.e.* you shall advance towards the same things at the same speed and with the same eagerness as they did). It shall come to this that if they had entered the hole of gheco, you will do likewise." Someone asked the Prophet : "O Prophet of God, do you mean the Jews and the Christians when you say that we shall follow our forerunners ?"

The Prophet replied: "Yes, who else?" (*Bukhari and Muslim*).

According to a second tradition narrated by Hadrat 'Abdullah b. 'Amr (may God bless him), the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) declared : "My Ummah will inevitably pass through the same degenerate period as the children of Israel did. The shoe of the right foot is exactly like the shoe of the left foot. Likewise, following the same instance if one of the tribes of Israel had been guilty of adultery with his own mother, some people of my Ummah will commit the same sin." Then, said the Prophet : "Without doubt the children of Israel had divided themselves into seventy-two sects ; and my Ummah shall split herself in seventy-three sects. All these sects will be consigned to Hell, save one." The companions enquired about the exceptional one which shall deserve Paradise. The Prophet told them : "The one whom I spoke of will follow the path that I and my companions follow." (*Miskhat*).

False Prophets shall Appear

Hadrat Thauban (may Allah be pleased with

him) states that the Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) observed : "When my Ummah shall be divided by the sword (in other words when my Ummah will engage in internecine warfare), the sword shall continue to be wielded till Doomsday. Doomsday will not come until many sections of my Ummah enter the fold of unbelievers and start worshipping false deities. Then the Prophet observed: Indeed there shall appear thirty false prophets in my Ummah and each one of them will announce himself as a true messenger, whereas I am the final and the last Messenger in the line of the prophets of God. God will not send another prophet after me." (*Mishkat*)."

People Shall Refrain Calling a Spade a Spade; They Shall not Call a Cruel Man, a Cruel Man; They Shall Forsake Guiding People on the Right Road and Will Give up the Practice of Dissuading People from Evil-Doings

Hadrat 'Abdullah bin 'Amr (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) told him : "When you see my Ummah in such a state that they shall fear calling the cruel man as cruel, leave them, *i.e.* dissociate yourself from their company and assemblies." (*al-Hakam*).

Naked Females Shall Lay the Snare of Temptation for Men

Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the Prophet of God had affirmed : "Two groups of men destined for Hell will appear in

future. I have not seen them because they are not born yet." The Prophet explained further : "One group will appear who will carry long stripes like the tail of oxen and they will go about beating people with them. They will live under the curse and wrath of Almighty God morning and evening. The second group that will appear will consist of women wearing garments that will reveal their bodies naked to sight. They will tempt strangers and will be tempted by them. Their heads shall look like the humps of the camel. They shall neither enter heaven nor will they ever smell the scent of it, although indeed the sweet smell of Paradise is spread far and wide (*i.e.* it can be smelt from as far away in time and space as the distance covered in a number of years)." (*Muslim*).

This *hadith* makes two predictions : One of them relates to the appearance of a tyrannical class of people who will carry lashes and go about beating people, *i.e.* they will victimise the weak and helpless in the pride of power and will harass the public without ryhme and reason.

The second prediction is about women, *i.e.* there shall appear such women in future who will appear clad but in reality they will be as naked as if they had worn no dress at all. They shall wear transparent garments which will reveal their bodies or otherwise they shall wear tight garments which will make the curves of their limbs more prominent and visible to the eye : and in both cases the wearing of the dress or going about with bare bodies will be one and the same. And to-day along with the tightness of the dress the matching of the colour of the cloth with the com-

plexion of the wearer, has also become a fashion. For instance such brown colour socks have become a part of dress which stick tight to the shank from the feet upwards like the skin of the body.

There is another mode of wearing garments and yet being naked, *i.e.* to wear scanty dresses keeping bare most of the body especially those portions which modest women keep covered from the sight of *Mahram*. In Europe (and even in certain Asian cities for instance, in Bombay, Rangoon, Singapore, Lahore and Karachi etc.) it is now a common custom that the shirt comes down to the knees. The arms are bare above 2 or 3 inches from the shoulder. The shanks are naked and the head is bare without any scarf. God's curses may fall on such women who do not repent.

Then the Prophet observed: "These women shall tempt men and be tempted by them", which means that the custom of nudity will not arise due to poverty, but that the purpose in going about naked shall be to show off the body to men and to seduce their hearts. These women shall adopt a second means of seduction, *i.e.* their heads shall not be covered with head dress, they shall saunter as when the camel runs fast the top of its back tilts towards the ground. The comparison of the camel's back also suggests that they shall wear their hair high like hives. Then the Prophet affirmed that such women shall not enter Paradise, nor even shall they be able to smell the sweet scent of it. The Shari'ah of Islam has declared fornication unlawful and has forbidden even those things which provoke lust, so much so that even if a woman who has smeared her body with a pungent scent passes through men

with the idea that the men should smell the scent on her body—this very act will constitute the sin of adultery (temptation to adultery).

Red Windstorm will Blow, Quakes will Rock the Earth, Appearances will be Distorted and the Skies will Shower Stones Upon Earth

Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "When the spoils of war will be regarded as personal property (instead of collective estate), and the things kept in trust shall be expropriated ; when the *Zakat* shall be regarded as an indemnity ; and religious knowledge shall be gained merely to serve worldly interests ; when the husbands shall follow the counsels of their wives and shall subject their mothers to harassment ; when men shall be thicker with their friends and estranged from their fathers ; when mosques shall resound with the talk of the world ; when the leaders of the tribe shall become unbelievers ; when base people shall be appointed as leader of nations ; when the mischievous shall be respected on account of fear ; when the number of dancing and singing women shall proliferate and musical instruments gain popularity ; when posterity shall begin to despise their pious forebears ; then at that juncture wait for the red windstorms and earthquakes ; look forward then to being buried alive in the earth and expect your appearances to be distorted and await the falling of stones from the skies—along with the calamities, await other signs too which shall follow in rapid succession, as beads fall one after

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the other when the string is broken." (*Tirmidhi*).

Homicide will Become Order of the Day

Haḍrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) relates that the Prophet of God (peace be upon him) swore upon God and observed : "The end of the world shall not come unless it so happens that the assassin shall not realise why he killed his victim and the murdered shall have no idea why he was deprived of life. Someone enquired : "Why will it be so?" The Prophet observed, "Because of mischievous conflicts there shall be widespread slaughter among men." Then observed the Prophet : "In these evil wars the slaughterer and the slaughtered shall both enter Hell." (*Muslim*).

The common cause of most murders that are taking place to-day is none else than mischief mongering. Thousands of lives are lost in conflicts arising out of national chauvinism or sectarianism and in these clashes neither the killer knows whom he killed nor the dead man knows his killer. Anyone identified and caught as belonging to another sect is destroyed and the mere fact of his belonging to different sect than his own is a sufficient justification for the murderer to destroy his victim.

The conflicts between the dogmas of a few people has given rise to the invention of such weapons of war that cities upon cities are wiped off the face of the earth in instant. The wonder is that each side claims that they want peace. The mercy of the worlds (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has declared in respect of communal and sectarian warfare that, "He who fights for

the cause about which he does not know whether it is right or wrong; he who is inflamed by trial passions; he who provokes sectarian fury; he who supports sectarianism if he be killed in conflict; he dies an infidel. The second tradition relates that he is not one of us who provokes sectarianism, or fights for it and dies for a sectarian cause. (*Mishkat*).

A companion enquired : "O Prophet of God what is exactly meant by sectarianism". The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) replied "When you support your people in evil doing and oppressive acts, you are guilty of sectarianism."

Decline in the Population of Men and Mounting Trends in Drunkenness and Debauchery

Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) relates that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed: "One of the signs of the approaching doom will be that knowledge will disappear, ignorance will increase, adultery shall be widespread, drunkenness will be freely indulged in, population of men will decrease and the number of women will increase to such an extent that a single man will suffice for fifty women."

New Beliefs and New Practices will Gain Currency

Haḍrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Towards the end of this world swindlers shall be born. They will

tell you things you had never heard before, nor your forebears would have heard them. Save yourself from their influence and let them keep away from you lest they should mislead you into mischief". (*Muslim*).

In elaboration of this tradition the author of *Mirqat* observes: "These people will tell lies, make innovations and initiate wrong beliefs".

A number of such people have lived in the past. One of them was Ghulam Ahmed of Qadian, who pronounced Hadrat 'Isa (peace be upon him) dead, refuted the finality of prophethood and put forth his own claim as being the prophet of God. Apart from this he is notorious for introducing many wrong beliefs and practices. The gravest menace for the people of Islam is the fact that whenever a mischievous party with evil designs and foul beliefs raises its head, its adherents start making attempts to affirm their false claims with quotations from the Qur'an and *Hadith*. For instance in these days endeavours are being made to prove the authenticity of Communism with the help of Holy Qur'an and efforts are being made to adapt the modern democracy to the Islamic Democratic ideals.

Each Successive Period will be Worse than the Former

Hadrat Zubair b. 'Adi (may God be pleased with him) states : "We waited upon Hadrat Anas b. Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) and lodged a complaint against the atrocities perpetrated by Hajjaj." Hadrat Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) heard the complaint and then observed : "Be patient (no one can say what will happen next) for you shall see

that each succeeding period will be worse than the former until you finally reach the presence of your Creator (*i.e.* no period that follows shall be better than the time preceding it, and it will continue to be so until your end). So have I heard from the Prophet of God (peace be upon him). (*Bukhari*).

The moral is that it is useless to complain against the time or the people who live in a certain period and it is a false hope to expect better rulers in future. Hence one should be content with whatever time one has and should offer thanks to the Almighty for whatever span of life, He has granted him. One should pin one's hopes upon God while performing good and pious deeds and one should always be in fear of God's wrath and punishment.

Infidelity shall be Widespread

Hadrat Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) states that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had declared : "Hasten to perform good deeds before mischiefs engulf you like the wrappings of a dark night. In this dark period man shall be a believer in the morning and turn an infidel in the evening; and when he proclaims faith in the evening, he shall be found to have become an unbeliever next morning. Man shall sell his faith for a bit of worldly interest." (*Muslim*).

One Class of People shall Remain Firm in Righteousness and the Revivalists would Continue to Come

Hadrat Mu'awiya (may Allah be pleased with

him) states I heard the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observing : "In my Ummah there shall always exist a class of God-fearing men which shall adhere to the cause of Allah till the end. Their opposition or non-cooperation with them shall do them no harm, *i.e.* they shall not care about the attitude of the age towards them—whether it is in favour or against them." I (Khwaja Mohammad Islam) the Publisher of this book believe that the Prophet of God (peace be upon him) meant by these words Tablighi-Jama'at.

Islam will Survive in Name Only and the Qur'an shall be Extant in Words : Evil Scholars will be Born

Haḍrat 'Ali (may God bless him) states that the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed : "Soon a time will come when Islam shall exist in name only and Qur'an shall be regarded as a formal book. Their mosques (floral and colourful decoration, tilework, electric fans etc.) shall be in a flourishing state, but will be bereft of the light of faith. Their scholars and guides shall be the worst of them all who inhabit under the sun. These scholars will produce dissensions, and they shall be seized by their mischiefs." (*Baihaqi*).

"Islam will survive in name only." This tradition means that the rituals of Islam shall become formal and their aspirit shall vanish. For example, prayer, fasting, *Zakat* and Hajj have now become rituals only. Their true spirit and the mode of their performance in strict conformity with the Sunnah of the Prophet has

vanished. Millions of Musalmans are ignorant of the true spirit of these Islamic rituals. The Qur'an is recited formally. Its words and the beauty of recitation are prized and given high regard, but thoughtful contemplation of true meanings of its words and to renounce things declared unlawful by this Book : this is ignored and the idea of it has completely gone out of the minds of the present-day Musalmans. The mosques are lavishly docorated with beautiful things : attractive floors, precious carpets, lights and other articles of comfort are available in the mosques ; but the light of faith is nowhere to be found in our mosques. The mosques resound with unabashed talk of the worldly affairs, mutual recrimination and backbiting ; and the preacher and the Muezzin regard the mosque as their private residence. I shall elaborate this point while explaining the next tradition.

The Prophet declared in regard to the scholars : They shall spread mischief and shall be seized by it. This means that the scholars shall become evil-minded and will renounce the path of piety and true belief. Then the world shall be seized by conflicts and wars and the scholars themselves will be caught in the vicious circle of warfare initiated by them. The tradition can also bear another meaning : that the scholars will lend support to the oppressors and people of worldly interests. They will create situation and make pronouncements in favour of worldly men in order to get material rewards from them and later these same worldly people will subject the scholars to tyranny and oppression.

Ibn Majah narrates a tradition that the Prophet

of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : "In my Ummah a class of people shall arise who will gain religious knowledge and study the Qur'an. They will then go to the rich and say 'We visit the rich to earn our livelihood and we protect our belief and get apart from them. After earning our livelihood from the rich we keep no connection with them'." Then said the Prophet : "This is impossible (it can never be that you visit those who hanker after worldly goods and yet remain firm in your belief in God. As the thorny tree bears nothing but thorns, so contact with the rich produces nothing but sin."

Those evil scholars who wait upon the rich are misguided. They go to the rich to gain a few coins and lose their dignity. Hadrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (may God bless him) observes that if the learned had saved their learning and had practised their knowledge for the benefit of capable persons, they would have become leaders of the age. Instead they expended their learning in the service of worldly people and because of this they fell into disgrace in the eyes of the worldly men. (*Mishkat*).

Like common people the modern ulema have also grown indifferent to the task of making provisions for Hereafter ; they care not about their end. They be all and end all of all their knowledge is the present mortal world. They are preoccupied with the business of becoming political leaders, achieving money and hoarding riches. There are only a few exceptions among the modern ulema who engage in the work of propagation of Islam, otherwise the general conduct of the ulema is such that they preach nationalism,

socialism or communism in public meetings and instead of calling upon people to follow the message of the Prophet (peace be upon him) they invite the people to accept their self-made isms.

The Mosques will be Decorated and will Serve as a Platform for Worldly Speeches

Hadrat Anas (may God bless him) relates that the Prophet of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) observed that one of the forebodings of the Doomsday shall be that the people would vie with one another in the building of the magnificent mosques and then will want to claim credit for it. (*Abu Dawud etc.*).

It is the same state of affairs to-day and to quote Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas (may God be pleased with him) : "You will no doubt decorate your mosques like the Jews and Christians who decorated their houses of worship." The mosques are bedecked with eye-catching colourful tiles, attractive lights, costly curtains and other decoration articles of comfort. As a result except during the prayers hour, the doors of the mosques have perforce to be locked and for safety's sake the need has arisen for employing permanent keepers and guards in the mosques. The mosques are full of these worldly things; but they remain empty of worshippers. The people who come to the mosque to pray engage themselves instead in worldly talks. There is no pious and sincere worship in the mosques, neither are there institutions of learning, nor religious guidance, nor do the mosques resound with the recitation of God's words; whereas the mosques in the times of the Prophet

of God (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the pious Caliphs (Companions of the Prophet) was a centre for the promotion of religion and religious works and was an institution for guidance in the matters of religion.

According to a tradition in *Kanz-ul-'Ummal*, "When you start decorating your mosques and making the Book of God look attractive, beware then : Your doom is impending. The tradition of Baihaqi quoted in *Shu'ab-al Iman* relates that the Prophet of God observed: A time will come when such people will arise who will make it a custom to engage in worldly talk in their mosques. Do not sit in their company for God has no use for such people."

Birth Rate of Illegitimate Children will Increase

Hadrat Maimuna (may God bless her) relates that the Prophet of God (peace be upon him) observed: "This Ummah will remain safe and blessing will continue to be showered upon her people until illegitimacy will prevail and the number of children born out of wedlock will become great. When that comes to pass, the entire Ummah will face the danger of calamitous visitation."

Abu Ya'la has made this addition in the tradition related by Hadrat Maimuna (may God be pleased with her) that when adultery shall become widespread, then the poverty and degeneracy will also prevail. This prediction has come true in modern times. One of the causes of the downfall of Muslim people is adultery and the custom of debauchery is openly followed by them to-day.

A wall of the house of Hadrat Mutraf bin 'Abdullah became infirm and inclined towards one side. People said to him: "Sir, why don't you get it repaired?" He replied: "The master of the house will not permit us to live here, then why should we bother to repair it." Then said he: "Hadrat Noah was blessed with a long span of life, yet, in spite of it, he had built a hut with the bark of a date tree and lived in it." The people said: "It would be better if you built a house for yourself." He replied: "This suffices for one who will soon meet death." He further declared: "A time will come when people will demolish religion and erect lofty buildings."

When the Doomsday Approaches

When all the true believers will pass away, then the people of Abyssinia will gain supremacy. Their empire shall include all countries. They will pull down the House of God; Hajj will be abolished ; the Holy Qur'an will be effaced from the hearts, tongues and the leaves of paper. The virtues of Godliness, truthfulness and fear of the Eternal will vanish from the hearts of the people. Shame and modesty will disappear. People will engage in unlawful sexual intercourse in the open like the donkeys and dogs do. The tyranny and ignorance of the rulers and the custom of molesting one another among the subjects will gradually increase. Hence the villages will become desolate. Big towns shall be reduced to villages and big cities shall decrease to the size of hamlets.

Famine, epidemics and bloodshed: these calamities will appear in rapid succession. Sexual intercourse

will increase, but births will decrease. Tendency to raise and support the voice of truth will disappear from the hearts. Ignorance will increase to such an extent that no one capable of uttering the word 'Allah' will be found. During this time the country of Syria will enjoy comparatively more peace and prosperity. Due to hardship all types of people with their families shall start migrating from all other countries to Syria. After some time a great conflagration will appear from the south and spread tawards the people. People shall flee from this fire, but the fire shall follow them. At noon when people shall lie down with exhaustion, the conflagration will also stop chasing them. When the sun is high, the fire shall again come upon them. In the evening, the fire will stop and the people shall also rest. At dawn fire will pursue them once more and people will run before it. In this manner the fire will drive the people to the country of Syria. Thereafter the fire shall recede and disappear. Later on some people out of sentiments of love for the countries of their origin will set out for their parent countries. But by and large a greater proportion of people shall remain in Syria.

The last indications of the approach of the Doomsday are these: The first sign of the fall of doom will be that for three or four years people shall remain unaware and the worldly pleasures and lusts will be widespread. Early in the morning on a Friday (which will also be a day of '*Ashura*) people shall engage in their daily tasks, a voice will be heard by the people. This will be the trumpet sound. People in all corners shall hear the voice equally clearly and they shall be

wonder-struck as to what is this voice and whence it comes. Gradually this voice will rise hard and sharp like the thunderbolt there shall be great commotion among the people due to this. When the voice will rise to the highest pitch, people shall start dying out of fear. An earthquake will come; people shall run out of their homes in fright and come into the plains. The wild beasts will run out of the forests in panic and rush into the crowds of people. The earth will divide into fissures here and there. The oceans will owerflow their shores and inundate the habitations all around. The fire will die out. The heaviest and tallest mountains will be broken into pieces and these pieces will fly about in fast winds like the grains of sand. The universe will be plunged into darkness by the rising clouds of dust and windstorms. The voice of doom will continue to grow harder and harder till by the impact of its terrific pitch, the skies will burst asunder and the stars will be broken into shatters.

Hudhaifa (may God be pleased with him) relates that the Prophet of God (peace be upon him) affirmed: "The doom will not fall until the time when the most foolish person or a son of the most stupid fellow becomes the most fortunate and the richest man (*i.e.* until the time when the men of evil nature and foul character capture authority and rule in the world and become masters of its wealth). (*Mishkat*).

Abu 'Ubaida and Mu'adh bin Jabal observed : The Prophet of God (peace be upon him) has said : "This phenomenon (*i.e.* religion) has been revealed with prophethood and blessings (*i.e.* in the initial period of religion came revelations and blessings). This will

be followed by the period of Khilafat and blessings. Thereafter shall follow the reigns of tyrannical kings and the next period will witness pride, wrath, suppression and world-wide wars (*i.e.* there shall arise mischiefs and wars on earth). During this period people will regard it lawful to wear silk garments. They will consider drinking and debauchery as permissible. And in spite of all this God shall send them provisions to eat and they shall be succoured until they are called to the presence of God (*i.e.* they shall be presented before God on the Day of Judgment). (*Mishkat*).

The signs of doom have been communicated by God to the people through His Messenger, but the exact time of the fall of doom has not been revealed even to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Yet according to the traditions related by Ibn Majah and Musnad Ahmad it is certain that the doom shall fall on a certain Friday. The tradition further relates that eminent angels, and the skies, the earth, the winds, mountains and the rivers—all tremble in fear lest the doom falls to-day. In point of fact the exact time of the fall of the doomsday is known to none except the God Almighty. Some people have told the time of the fall of doom through guess-work. But that is mere conjecture and falls into the category of speculation.

When the people enquired from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) about the exact time of the fall of doom, the Great and Almighty God sent a command :

> "Say unto them the knowledge in this regard rests with My Creator. He shall reveal the doom at the appointed time. The doom shall

> overcome the sky and the earth. The doom shall descend upon you all of a sudden.

Each word of benevolence and good cheer is the patrimony of the faithful. Pick it up wherever you find it.

The axioms of the pious people of God are pure gems.

REAL GEMS

When an elder of a Nation visits you, adore him. The mischief-monger will be seized by his own evil-doings and he shall be fettered by his sins. God Almighty disapproves of the following six : (1) Wanton eyes ; (2) A Lying tongue ; (3) Hands that hurt the innocent ; (4) Heart that hatches evil plans ; (5) Feet that hasten towards sin; (6) The witness who gives false testimony and creates dissensions among brothers.

Talking too much is a sin to some extent. He who holds his tongue is wise. The Path of God affords strength to the upright and leads the evil-doer to his Doom.

No man can sustain himself with evil. But the foundations of the True shall not shake.

The little that the God-fearing possesses is more precious than the Treasure of the sorrowful.

Do not spare thy son from punishment, for the rod will not kill him ; but you will save him from the Hell-Fire. Blessed are those who are meek in heart, for they

shall go to Heaven. Blessed are those whose hearts are full of sorrow, for they shall find solace. Blessed are those who are kind, for they shall be shown kindness. Blessed are those who have been persecuted for upholding the Truth for the kingdom of Heaven is theirs ; for they shall enter the kingdom of Heaven. The people persecuted in the like manner the Prophets who came before you. To eat oat-bread, to drink pure water and to sleep in the open plain is good for the mortals.

The way-farer has to travel on two journeys : The world and the Eternity; for both, he needs wherewithal. Keep thy wherewithal with you while travelling through the world and despatch it beforehand before you start on the road to Eternity.

Two things are pleasant in the world : Pleasant talk and a heart full of pleasant cheer.

A sage had a friend, but he was unwise. He requested the sage to teach him the sublimest name. The sage first declined and dissuaded him, by saying "You have no ability to learn it." The fool did not come round and insisted on learning it. At last the sage taught him and put him through the test. At the same time the sage warned the fool not to make use of that for it would bring him harm. After giving him this last advice, the sage departed. The fool now thought of seeing its effect. He saw some bones and lost no time in reciting the sublimest name. Lo! a lion rose, came roaring and devoured the fool. When the sage returned by that way, he saw the remains of the dead fool being eaten by the lion. The sage asked the lion, "Why did you kill this man?" Replied the

lion, "This man created me, but had no power to provide for my subsistence. He was my Creator, but had no care for my sustenance, so I ate him."

To look upon the houses, properties and gardens of the people stimulates the instinct of worldly greed and worldly greed is the antithesis of piety.

Whatever goes into a man from outside cannot pollute him for it goes not into his heart, but into his stomach and is ultimately purged in defecation. On the other hand whatever comes out of a man really pollutes him for it is from inside the man that come out evil thoughts ; evil deeds ; *e.g.* stealing, violence ; adultery, greed, sin, affectation, lust, evil eye, back-biting, boasting and stupidity. All these come out of a man and make him a sinner.

Wealth cannot be obtained by mere wishing ; youth cannot be attained by applying black paint ; health does not come by medication.

Worship of God is a vocation; its store is privacy ; its capital is piety ; and its profit is the attainment of Paradise.

The redness of gold and the yellowness of saffron have destroyed the women.

That man is unfortunate who dies but whose sins survive him ; for instance minting of counterfeit currency, initiation of evil practices or publication of evil books etc. Law suits should be settled promptly, for the petitioner may give up the case by losing heart through delay in obtaining justice. It is hetter to avoid the friendship of a man of evil nature, for even when he wants to do a good deed, he commits evil under the stress of his nature.

To speak a little is the hall-mark of wisdom ; to eat a little brings health ; to sleep a little is akin to worship and to abstain from mixing freely with the common people brings peace and protection.

The following are worse (in the eye of Allah) :

An inaccessible scholar ;
A weapon which is not usable ;
Riches that are not expended in the ways of God.
Knowledge that is not put into use.
Mosque where no worshippers came to pray ;
Prayer which is not offered in a mosque ;
A right counsel which is rejected.
A scripture which is not recited.
A pious man who is tied to worldly care.
A long life without good deeds (which are a provision for the next world).

If you have a 'seeing' eye, each day is a Day of Judgment.

Do you wish for a fine garment ? Remember thy shroud.

Do you wish for a fine house ? Remember the pit of thy grave.

Do you wish for fine food ? Remember thou wilt yourself be a food for insect, and worms.

Deed which is not fit for doing in open should not be done in secret.

Avoid absolutely the mischievous women ;
Beware of even those who are good-natured.

The following three persons deserve utmost pity:

(1) A scholar bound to serve under the ignorant.
(2) A good man living under a tyrant ruler.
(3) A man of good deeds ruled by an evil-doer.

Indeed inside of the earth is dead ; and its surface is plagued with sickness (*i.e.* the dead lie under the earth and those wno live on the surface of the earth are plagued by suffering).

Without doubt the world and Hereafter are like co-wives of a man. When he tries to please the one, he is damned by the other.

Haḍrat 'Ali's generosity knew no bounds, so much so that he helped the poor whereas he himself starved. On a certain day he returned home in the evening with two dirhams that were his wages for an honest day's work. He found a needy person at his door. Haḍrat 'Ali gave away one dirham to the needy. The man began to look closely at the dirham. A passer-by asked him, "Have you sold anything for money that you are so closely examining the coin ?" The man replied, "Yes, I have sold my self-respect." Hearing this Haḍrat 'Ali gave away the second dirham also to the man and said, "Forgive me, I could not pay the full price of your self-respect." The same episode recurred for three days. Whatever Haḍrat 'Ali earned as wages against a hard day's work, he turned it over to the beggar and Hadrat 'Ali and his family suffered the pangs of hunger for three days continuously. The most excellent *jihad* is to control your anger when you have the power to avenge the wrongs done unto you.

A house to live in, a dress to cover the body, food to fill the belly and a wife—this is not the love of the world. The worldly love is that you rivet your attention to the material world and turn your back to God. It is not proper for the pious to go to sleep without his will under the pillow. You are engaged in

amassing things that you cannot eat ; you wish for things you will never possess; you build houses that you will never inhabit for ever. All those things estrange you from God. Leave the pride for Creator. Know thy real self. Be moderate in your desires. Your beginning is a drop of semen that stinks ; the middle part of your life is a package of dirt and your end is a lifeless body which shall be cast away.

When a man does not give up sin and refuses to obey the commands of the Almighty even till he attains the age of ten scores, the Satan wipes his face with his own hand saying: I admire thy face. The pious plants a fruit tree and dreads that it may bear thorns instead ; the hypocrite sows the seeds of thorns and hopes that these will grow into sweet dates. A sage said to Caliph Harun-al-Rashid, "Look upon the old Muslims among thy subjects as thy fathers ; the young men as thy brothers, the youth as thy children ; and the women as thy mothers and sisters and treat them as thou would treat thy own mother, father, brother and sister"

He who calls for prayer (the Muezzin) is a Herald of the Merciful and the singer is the Herald of Satan.

When a woman engages in sweet talk with a stranger she enters the province of evil ; when she puts on thin clothes she is still naked.

Observed the Sage : "The heart is enlightened that holds no love for the things of the world ; Darkened is the heart that holds no love for the people of the world. The best deed is that which is performed without the fear and favour of people and the best morsel is that which is earned by the sweat of one's brow."

The man who deadens his heart with a multitude of desires, wrap that heart in the shroud of curse, and bury it in the land of humiliation. He who keeps his heart clear of evil yearnings, wrap him in the shroud of blessing and bury him in the land of salvation. Silence is a prayer without labour ; awe without domination, a castle without battlements ; victory without weapons ; rest for the guardian angels ; a fortress for the pious, a characteristic of the meek ; the rulers use it to overawe their subjects ; it is a treasure-house of wisdom ; and it is the only answer to the querries of the ignorant.

He who wants to keep himself safe from the torments of the grave, the extent of his connexion with the world should be like his stay in the lavatory while he relieves himself. Quite often delay in marriage leads to fornication and the burden of curse falls upon the parents. Thou art in this world a traveller towards Eternity ; birth is the beginning of thy travels, grave is the end of thy journey. Each year of thy life is a destination on the way ; each month, a league, each day, a milestone and every breath is but a step towards thy End. He who keeps himself engaged in the remembrance of God even in the busy market is like a living man among the lifeless ; a fighter in the way of Allah among the conceited and is like a green tree in the withered wood. The foundation that will not meet destruction is justice, bitterness the end of which is sweet, is patience ; sweetness the end of which is bitterness is lust, illness that is incurable is a curse, merry-making is a calamity from which people should run away.

A man asked Haḍrat Shaqiq Balkhi for his will.

The sage observed, "If you want a friend, God will suffice for you. If you need companions you have thy Guardian Angels. If you need a helper, turn to the Qur'an. Do you need work? Prayer and worship are enough work for you ; If you need a lesson, death will teach you one. If you don't like what I have said, Hell will suffice for thee. Worship God to the extent of thy strength and need ; take from the world to the extent of thy life ; commit sins to the extent to which you can bear the wrath of God. Make provision in life to the extent that you shall have to live in the grave. Do good deeds to the extent of your desire to stay in the Paradise. Air keeps the record of man's words and deeds. God provides ; man expropriates. The test of a man is a woman ; the test of a woman is riches ; the test of the coin is fire. Headache is never cured by wearing a crown. An unjust king ; a rich man devoid of commonsense ; a minister who does not appear to tell the truth ; the generous who does not spend his wealth at proper places ; the learned whose counsel is not well-considered : all these deserve pity for they shall soon come to grief and their estate shall be ruined. The elders are pleased by obedience ; the equals by politeness ; the youngers with affection and sympathy ; and the envious are pleased when the others are deprived of favours. Be not so soft, as to be easily squeezed ; not so dry so as to be easily broken. A man of few words; he who eats a little ; and he who is harmless always remains safe, happy and protected against hardships. Falsehood is the enemy of faith ; soliciting destroys respect ; anger eats up good sense and dishonesty destroys wealth. A talk that

contains no element of piety, is base ; silence without thought and meditation is error. An eye which does not see the end without a sense of warning is lustful.

Haḍrat Khwaja Hassan Basri says that the cur (the dog) possesses ten such qualities which all the pious should develop in themselves :—

(1) It starves ; this is the way of the pure. And it is content with the little that it gets ; this is the quality of those who show perseverance.

(2) It has no house ; this is the sign of those who trust in God for the provision of habitation ;

(3) It sleeps a little during the night ; this is the characteristic of those who keep awake at night and worship and a trait of those who love God.

(4) When it dies, it leaves behind no property. Such is the virtue of those who tread the path of piety.

(5) It does not leave the side of its master, though he may beat it and treat it with cruelty, this is the trait of the true faithful.

(6) It is content to lie in a lowly place ; this is the virtue of the noble.

(7) When some other creature occupies its living space it willingly vacates it and carries itself to some other place. This is the trait of those who acquiesce in the will of God and believe in self-sacrifice.

(8) When you beat it, and afterwards throw a piece of bread before it, it comes to you at once. It does not nurse any grudge against you for beating it. This is the trait of the true devout.

(9) It looks at food from afar but does not come near it without permission of the master. This is the virtue of the humble.

(10) Having migrated from one place, it is not inclined to return. This is the trait of the aggrieved.

My good man! Learn the lesson of contentment from the dog. You have often observed that the pariah barks at the hound as if saying, "O Pitiable creature? When you inclined towards fine and delicious meats, you were fettered in chains. If you had contented yourself with left-over and pieces of stale bread, you would have been free and unchained like us".

Haḍrat Abu Hazim(may God bless him) observes: "If thou art near and dear to the Almighty, it is no harm if the world does not recognize you. If thou art high in the estimation of God, it is no loss to you if the world does not praise you. If thou art successful in the eyes of God, do not fear for thy defeat in the circumstances of life. If thou art loved by God, no harm if the whole world hates thee."

Haḍrat Ka'b Ahbar (may God show him mercy) observes: "In the later period the learned will wrangle among themselves to get themselves nearer the rich just as men fight among themselves over women".

Haḍrat Dahak bin Mazahim (may God show him mercy) says: "I searched the whole night for a word that shall please the king and at the same time may not displease the Almighty, but failed to find one."

Haḍrat 'Abdullah bin Salam (may God be Merciful to him) narrates that a prophet complained to God of being in distress. God sent this revelation to the Prophet : "How long will you go on complaining against Me? I am not worthy of any blame or accusation. Your beginning in the unseen world was such. Hence why dost thou show resentment against

my Sovereign system? Dost thou wish that I should change the whole course of the universe for thy sake and make amendments in what is indelibly written and carry out thy wishes and give up exercising My own Sovereign Will? I swear by My own Majesty if thou shalt entertain such thoughts in your mind again, I shall deprive you of Prophethood, and consign you to Hell and I pay heed to none (in such matters)"

Muslim Nihath (may God be Merciful to him) observes: "When a new dirham or a dinar is minted, the Satan comes and stamps a kiss on it saying : 'He that loves thee is my true slave'."

Hadrat 'Umar bin 'Abdul 'Aziz had a slave girl. She woke up one morning and related to the Caliph her dream thus: "I saw in a dream last night that the fires of Hell were ignited and the Bridge over which the righteous shall pass into Paradise was decorated and caliphs were called upon to cross that bridge. Caliph 'Abdul Malik b. Marwan stepped on the bridge, but fell down." Caliph 'Umar b. 'Abdul 'Aziz said, "Proceed on with the story". The slave girl continued, "Then Caliph Sulaiman b. 'Abdul Malik was brought to cross over the bridge, but he fell down too. Then they brought you.." As the slave girl was saying this, the Caliph collapsed and fell into a faint. The slave girl cried, "By Heaven you crossed over the bridge quite safely". As the slave-girl went on crying the Caliph was writhing in agony on the floor.

In this wretched world millions of people depend on social evils and malpractices. Millions of families subsist on earnings from the evils of drinking and debauchery. Thousands of departments of State are

operating because of the crimes, so much so that the livelihood of Priests is provided by the sinners.

Water extinguishes fire, the umbrella protects one from the sun. A mad elephant may be brought under control by a hooked iron bar, a stick can tame other animals and beasts. There is a remedy for every malady; there is an expiation for every sin but the stupidity of the foollish has no panacea. Relying upon outward appearances often causes remorse and regret, for some dishonest dealers in order to cover their malpractice put the label of 'Elixir' on a bottle containing poison.

A young wife despatches her old husband to the grave like a speed-horse delivers the post. The door that remains closed for the poor will open to admit a doctor.

A beautiful and virtuous woman is the perfect handiwork of God Almighty; she is the true light and glory of the angels; she is a miracle in the world and a rare thing on earth.

Need produces desire; desire leads to endeavour; endeavour leads to attainment and attainment of it brings the final result.

The modern generation may fly in the air; may communicate on wireless ; may benefit from the atomic power, but is devoid of the art of bringing up of children on right lines.

Peace: It is another name for diplomacy between the wars.

When the war is over the State has three armies : The army of wounded and the crippled : the army of mourners; and the army of thieves.

Ever since man took on the shape of a woman, she

has been chasing after him.

No country can be enslaved unless her own people help the invaders.

Says Luqman, "The axe cannot take off a bit of bark from the wood unless there is a handle of wood behind it."

Tie heavy stones round their waist and sink two such persons in the river: One, a man of wealth who does not share his riches with the needy and indigent; secondly, a man without wealth, who in spite of poverty does not worship the Almighty God.

Truth protects piety; study sustains knowledge; good deeds protect beauty; good actions save a family; correct weights and measures save grain; training strengthens the horse; tending keeps the animals fit; and simple dress protects the chastity of a woman.

Jabla, a famous Lord of Syria, had embraced Islam. He came to the Ka'ba on a pilgrimage. While going round the Ka'ba a corner of his garment was accidentally trampled under foot by another man. Jabla slapped on the face of the man. The man paid him in the same coin by slapping on the face. At this Jabla felt enraged. He went to Caliph 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) in high temper. Hadrat 'Umar said, "You committed an error and received punishment for it". Jabla said, "I belong to a class that brooks no insolence and a man of my exalted position shall sentence such a lowly person to death for this impertinence." Hadrat 'Umar observed, "So was the practice in the days before Islam. But Islam has levelled down all distinctions."

The Grand Shaikh Mahbub Ilahi Hadrat Nizam-

ud-Din Aulia observes: "If someone has spread thorns in thy way, sweep them off and if thou also hast in retaliation spread thorns in his way, the whole world will be full of thorns for you."

Hadrat Yaha bin Mu'adh observes: "He who is a slave of his carnal desires is caught in distress both in this world and the next. For in this world he faces trouble while seeking them and in the next, he meets punishment on account of the same. Remember a glutton has a fat belly and he will always be full of lust and consequently his sins will be greater and his heart will be hard as a rock and a hard-hearted man will eventually be condemned and will be committed to Hell-Fire."

Hadrat Rabih bin 'Umar says: "As long as a mosquito starves, it lives. When it sucks to its fill, it is bloated and dies. In the like manner when a man eats to his fill and fattens, he becomes soulless."

Hadrat Hatim Asim observes, "Satan inquires of me: "What do you eat? What is your dress? and Where do you reside? I answer him: My food is death, my dress is the shroud and my residence is the grave."

People once asked Hadrat Udham Balkhi, "Why does not the Exalted Lord answer our prayers?" The sage observed, "Because even while you recognize God and have faith in Him you do not obey Him. You recognise the Prophet of God but you do not follow his commands. You study the Qur'an, but do not live up to the ideals set by it; you eat the blessed things produced by God, but offer no thanks to Him. Whereas you know Paradise is reserved for the faithful, you have no will to enter it. Whereas you know that Hell

is reserved for sinners, you do not dread it. You look upon Satan as your enemy but you do not keep away from him, you rather befriend him. You bury your kith and kin with your own hands but learn no lesson from it. You consider death as inevitable but make no provisions for your own salvation. You would rather collect and amass worldly things. You do not give up your own faults but are quick to find fault with others. How can the prayers of such a man be granted?" Protect thy heart (from evil thoughts) while you are praying; spare thy tongue in company; control thy hand in anger and save your stomach while taking meals. Woman is but a trial, but when she learns how to read and write, she becomes a source of greater trial. See wealth that does not dwindle; life that is immortal; country that knows no decline and permanence that is without sorrow or weakness. Do not follow the dictates of women; you will thus remain safe from hardships of life.

The most profitable commerce is good fellowship; contentment is a great treasure; to be free from the chains of worldly care is real nobility. Reposing trust in God is thy protection and wisdom is the boat that will sail you safely to the port of salvation.

Justice produces peace and comfort; health is the result of good living; indolence is the result of weakness; truth is a trust given unto you and falsehood is an expropriation of this trust.

Pride is the enemy of knowledge; anger is the enemy of wisdom; the greed is the enemy of patience and falsehood is the enemy of truth;

Wealth compared to honour; grandeur compared

to wisdom; kingdom compared to worship; face compared to intrinsic worth and bravery compared to generosity are far inferior.

The substance of the Old Testament is this : He who is content with the provision that God has made for him finds solace in this world and the next.

The essence of the Zabur is this: He who severs his connexion with society will find salvation in this world and the Hereafter. The main gist of the teachings of the Bible is this: He who demolishes his desires is exalted in both the worlds. The sum total of the Holy Qur'an is this: He who is obedient to God and is good to his fellow men and keeps his tongue under control shall find safety in this world and the next.

Wealth is a fickle mistress; life is a transitory opponent neither are they stable, nor permanent.

He whose star is not in the ascendant, all his industry and skill becomes unpopular among the people. His gallantry is called mad impetuosity; his chaste speech appears trash; his kindness is taken as treacherous showing-off; his learning sounds useless and stupid and everything he does is counted as unprincipled. Four virtues rank above all: forgiveness while in anger; piety in seclusion; munificence in poverty; humility in spite of possessing power.

Miserliness will debase a wealthy man; greed will defame a ruler; indolence will corrupt the youth; pride will destroy the pious and the munificent will be damned if he feels sorry for what he has given in charity.

The tongue though not a sword is sharper than the sword. Talk though not an arrow, inflicts a severer

wound than the arrow. Anger, though not a lion, is more terrible than the lion. Intoxication though not a snake, is more dangerous than a snake. Sin, though not a poison, is more fatal than a poison. A scholar who does not put his knowledge into practice; wax without honey; a munificent without means; a tree that bears no fruit; a man who speaks falsehood; a talking animal; a foolish person; a sword without an edge—are all useless. A scholar who is an evil-doer, a sleeping rider; a pious man without right knowledge; a fast pedestrian; an unjust ruler; a dark well; a wealthy miser; a cloud that does not burst into rain; a munificent without having the will to donate; they are blackened both in this world and the next.

Ten things are the antithesis of the following ten things:—

(1) Piety wipes out evil; (2) Pride destroys knowledge; (3) Repentance washes away the sin; (4) Falsehood stops sustenance; (5) Justice removes tryranny; (6) Grief shortens life; (7) Charity keeps away the curse; (8) Rage eats up wisdom; (9) Repentance over what has been doled out nullifies charity; (10) Backbiting obliterates all good deeds.

Ten qualities in ten such men are not dear unto God:

(1) Miserliness in the rich; (2) Pride among the needy; (3) Greed among the scholars; (4) Immodesty among women; (5) Love of the world among the aged; (6) Indolence among the young; (7) Tyranny by the kings; (8) Cowardice among the fighters in the cause of Allah; (9) Self-praise by the pious; (10) Showing off by the devout.

Five things are painful: (1) Leprosy; (2) An evil-minded creditor; (3) An oppressive ruler; (4) A rude person; (5) An ignorant official and evil neighbour.

A walk through garden without friends is dull and devoid of pleasure ; Life is unpleasant without youth; Sweet drink is tasteless without rose flavour; Saddle is useless without a stirrup and an undyed beard gives no pleasure. A temperament without the flash of wit. Speech without wisdom unsaleable goods; heart devoid of generosity; man without courage; woman without chastity; power without command; medicine without precaution; life without a son; practice without knowledge and knowledge without practice—all these things are useless.

Eight things never rest content: (1) Eye from seeing; (2) Earth from rain water; (3) Woman from man; (4) The scholar from knowledge; (5) The petitioner from begging, (6) The greedy from hoarding wealth; (7) The river from holding water; (8) Fire without wood. (*Hadith*).

Three persons are the most cursed ones: (1) A conceited beggar; (2) An old adulterer; (3) A scholar who practices evil. (*Maxims of Haḍrat 'Ali*)

Two virtues distinguish a woman: (1) She should not permit herself to be seen by a stranger; (2) She should avoid seeing a stranger. (*Maxims of Haḍrat Fatimah*).

Look for four qualities in a woman: (1) Goodness of heart; (2) Modest appearance ; (3) Sweet tongue; (4) Busy hands;

Avoid company, you will be blessed with three things: (1) Physical comfort; (2) Spiritual strength; (3)

Purity of faith.

Do not be over-awed by the majesty of the kings; or by the pomp and power of the Lords; or be impressed by the fairness; delicacy and the attractive looks of the beautiful; look carefully and learn that they are all transient.

Your salvation lies in keeping away from the company of women; even though you do not indulge in fornication; To stand on the path which serves as a passage for women is a sin too.

In this world poetry is but a lament; music is but a melancholy strain, a drop of tear; light nothing else but an elusive hope.

O lovers of this world! In which worldly thing do you take such pride? It is a home where there is scarce well being. There are several types of evil in it. Its blessings are liable to decline and come to an end. He who compromises with the world becomes its prisoner. Its master is indeed its slave; and its provisions are to be abandoned after all.(*Haḍrat 'Ali*). Even if you search the whole world, you will find very few people fit for thy company. The condition of the people is such that their convictions and sayings are absurd; actions and deeds are sinful; in speech and counsel they sound as wise as Luqman, but in speech and action they are shameless as Satan himself. The youth are insolent to their elders; neighbours bitter towards each other, all noble and gentle people are properly clad, but in behaviour improper; they are tongue tied when it is time to speak in favour of the right; they carry the burden of cruelty upon them; they are followers and worshippers of the Satan; they have forgotten the Day

of Judgment; they are intoxicated with the wine of deceit; they show grain as sample to the customer, but sell him barley—hypocrite cheat ; they are the evil devouts of the temple of the Devil and to perpetrate cruelty is their vocation. They rest in the lap of their desires; have no care for the future nor even speak of their sins. Free from the business of earning their livelihood and lacking no provisions of food, they are busy in drinking and revelry. In contrast to them the learned, the industrious, the skilled and the righteous class go about scantily clad and with tearful eyes. Their bodies are naked and their beds are made of rags. They have no homes or are wanderers. The wise and the sensible suffer poverty and distress; the fool and the incompetent enjoy riches and comfort.

The old are unjust; the young are shameless and free from restraint; the youth are insolent; the class of the righteous is sorrowful; the group of evil-doers is full of cheer; right suffers defeat and is trampled upon; wrong is the victor and stands uppermost. The wolves have worn the skins of lambs and are shedding blood. Their friendship will lead to helplessness and if you become their fellow-traveller they will bring you back to where you started. Their vocation is deceit instead of prayer; love is a medicine which is not in the formulary of the quacks; fidelity is gem which cannot be found in the treasuries of this faithless world. Benevolence is like an eagle which will earn you only a good name. Justice is like an Alchemy trace of which is non-existent. Their expression is similar to the unity of boastful friends; it is like the uncertain favour of the kings; or the fickle friendship of the fair; or the company of the

insane; or like the faith of the ignorant or the pleasant childishness of the young. None of them is dependable, trust-worthy or reliable and you shall suffer harm at their hands even in small matters.

Verses

Do not welcome death with sorrow; labourer be happy when thou art released from work; your grief shall turn into joy; when thou shall sleep in peace; the dead have such comfort and peace that they do not want to rise again.

O people of the world ! Know that you will die on the appointed day ; and then you will rise after death and meet your punishment or be rewarded. Hence do not assume airs in this transient life and never forget your end. The world is full of thorns ; it is mortal, it is notorious and its ways are deceitful.

The end of every worldly thing is nothingness and none can possess a worldly thing for ever. The price of a few days' comfort in this world is to be paid in years of suffering. Death hovers over everybody and to taste it is incumbent upon every one. O people of God ! Your state in this world is like the state of your forebears. Their span of life was longer than yours ; they were more powerful than you are ; and they were more numerous in population and they lived in more palatial houses than you inhabit ; but the wheel of revolution has stilled their voices ; their bodies lie rotten in graves ; their cities have turned into ruins and their houses have crashed. They slept on velvet beds, rested on soft pillows and tread on carpeted floors in grand palaces and now they lie on hard rock

and sleep in the dry dust in a corner of the grave. Do you entertain any false hope that you shall not meet the same fate as your forebears did? Do you not think that you will not be in the same lonely state ; that you will not lie in the same dry dust and that your body will not serve as food for the moths and insects of the grave.

Verse

We plumed ourselves and dressed ourselves in gaudy dresses to receive the tribute of admiration from the world's eye ; little did we know that the world will witness instead our funeral procession. It is a pity that the soul flies away from the body ; the body is like a tight garment that will come off in tatters.
As it progresses, it decreases ; life passes on.
When I took closely at the world I see that every day is the Doomsday.

Someone put a question to Hadrat 'Ali : Which is better : Knowledge or Riches. He answered : Knowledge is better than riches, for riches are given to Pharaohs and Qarun ; knowledge is bestowed upon the Prophets. Man has to stand guard over his wealth, whereas knowledge itself serves as the Guardian of Man. A wealthy man makes many enemies ; a learned man gathers friends ; wealth decreases as it is used ; knowledge increases with usage.

The Rich are miserly ; the Learned are stingy. Riches can be stolen but no thief can carry off the treasury of knowledge. Wealth fills man with pride ; knowledge makes a man humble and soft in heart.

The extent of wealth has a limit, but the bounds of knowledge are limitless.

Those who are pure of heart miss no chance to do a good turn even to their enemies. The edge of the axe which cuts the sandal-wood is itself perfumed by the scent of the sandal.

A man went to a notorious robber and begged him to take him into his service. The robber Chief asked : "Where were you employed previously ?" The man replied : "I was in the employment of a Jurist for two years and then served in the Police for a year."

The robber took him into service and said : "Both of your previous employments were such as if you had all the time been serving as a member of our band." History records that Sukhdevji said to his father Badbiazji : "I want to master the Supreme Knowledge and become immortal in life." The father advised him to go and see Raja Janak. Since the young man was a true seeker he undertook a long journey and reached the main gate of the palace of Raja Janak. He told the gatekeepers to inform the Raja that Sukhdevji son of Badbiazji had arrived. The Raja told his servants, "Keep him waiting". After three days the young man again sent word that he wanted an audience. The Raja said to his servants : "Bring him to the other gate." There again he was kept waiting for three days. When the young man sent in word for the third time, the Raja said, "Bring him in." Sukhdev went in and observed all the pomp and show of the world inside. His heart was at once seized with the thought that this man had occupied himself in the mundane activities of this world, what could he learn

from him ? The Raja also sensed what the young man was thinking. The Raja kept the visitor as his guest and next day he took the young man round the city and showed him all the business and merry-making that was going on in the streets and bazaars of the city. The Raja then called Sukhdevji to his presence, and handing him a cup of milk which was full to the brim, said : "Go now and walk around the whole city of Janak, but beware ! not a single drop of milk should spill from the cup." The Raja sent two sentinels armed with sword with Sukhdevji and instructed them to cut Sukhdevji into pieces in case a single drop of milk fell over from the cup. As ordered, they escorted Sukhdevji round the city and brought him back. The Raja asked : "Did even a single drop of milk spill from the cup in his hand ?" The sentinels submitted, "Your Highness, had this occurred, this man would not have been standing before you alive. We would have cut him into pieces as you had ordered."

The Raja then turned to Sukhdevji and said, "You must have enjoyed the sights of the city. You must have seen the merrymaking and revelry of people." Sukhdevji replied, "Your Highness! I was all the time overwhelmed by the care of protecting this cup of milk. I was all the time seized with the dread of losing my life, in case a single drop of milk fell from the cup. How could I enjoy the scenes of revelry and make myself happy. I was so absorbed in the thought of protecting this milk that I could see nothing else." Upon this the Raja observed : "As you spent this day in oppressive care, so we spend all our days in constant

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care. This wealth, pomp and power are all of no significance to us. We do not care a fig for them. You were only impressed by our outward grandeur, authority, rule and riches. O ! Sukhdev learn from the experience you had this day : The angel of death is like a sentinel. Your body is compared to a cup which contains the milk of soul and the merry-making that is going on in the world to the transient scene of this world. We have not filled our heart with the love of world, lest the milk (our soul) is spilt, lest the heart be forgetful of God and damned. In such manner did Raja Janak teach Sukhdevji according to his lights and permitted him to depart. Four things are shameful :

(1) Shame of the day when one leaves home without taking meal. (2) Shame for a year when the season of cultivation passes in sloth and without any accomplishment. (3) Shame for whole life when there is no love between a husband and a wife. (4) Eternal shame when God Almighty is displeased with you.

Time is like a ball of corded cotton, spin it on the spindle of wisdom and knowledge and weave precious garments from it or else the windstorms of ignorance will scatter it away.

The pious man is like the earth on which dirt is scattered, but all that sprouts forth from it is fine and pure.

The sufi (pious) is one who sees a unique phenomenon in the voices of the animals, in every lament and song, in the twittering of the sparrows; in the scent of flowers; in the waving of green plants, in the brilliance of gems, in the glare of the sun, in the colour of the

trees, in the glass and in the rock, in harmony of the string and drum, in the hard core of the stone, in prosperity and misfortune, in the softness of the soil, in the heat of the fire, in the flow of the river, in the stars of the sky, in the rising hill, in the desert and the green pasture and in the spring and autumn the reflections of an unseen Reality.

O people of the world! Follow Mohammad, the Prophet of God (may peace be upon him). Act upon the commands of the Almighty. Do not make amendments in the law of the religion. Do not disobey. Be patient. Do not be impatient. Wait for expansion. Do not lose hope. Agree among yourselves in the remembrance of God. Create no dissensions among yourselves. Repent and be purged of your sins. Do not pollute yourselves with sins and do not keep yourselves away from the threshold of your Lord. Duties to God come first and then among the good deeds the best ones are : Feed the poor and entertain your guests, deal politely with high and low and this is a better deed. O meek one! Whatever you possess, give it away as a gift to the students of religion, the needful, and the poor or blind or to an institution of religious learning and receive thy reward from the Lord God. Do not leave any patrimony. The God Who gave you, will provide for thy children also. If your children be good, God will protect the good. If thy children be wicked you have no use for them.

Devote yourselves to the service of the Almighty. Look upon piety as an essential attribute. Do not follow your passions. Hold fast to the creed of patience. Be a seeker after God. Shun pride. Be not

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content with the charm of thy appearance. Eat a variety of foods, not with the inclination of a glutton, but with austerity. Eat all variety of foods, but your heart should always remain with God. You will be saved from illness caused by bad foods, if you eat according to the prescription of the physician.

Friends, we have become hard-hearted. We have lost the trust. Kindness and affection have disappeard from amongst us. The commands of Shari'ah were a trust with us ; we have lost them. It is a pity if we do not consider it as our bounden duty to protect what is entrusted to us. Soon we shall become blind. God will shut the doors of blessings upon us.

Friends, do not allow your heads to bow before anyone except the Lord God. Do not meet people like indifferent and blind fellows. Meet the people with an open, enlightened and receptive mind.

If you find anything good among those whom you meet, adopt it. If you find anything evil among them, avoid it and wean them away from it.

It is a pity you make so many excuses and find causes and arguments (for thy sins). He who finds excuses and offers arguments for his evil deeds is a faithless traitor.

The days of eloquence have gone by and those who were capable of using a sweet tongue have passed away. This is the age of licence, not of propriety. This is an ambiguous age ; an age of conflict and an age in which things belonging to others are wrongfully expropriated.

There are many people who offer prayers, keep fast, perform Hajj, pay Zakat and do all deeds to show

off to the public; they do not do such things in honour of their Creator. A major portion of this world consists of creatures. Friends we have all dead souls ; our passions are alive ; we possess living desires ; we seek the world. The life of the soul consists in deadening love for the world and devoting one's innerself to the remembrance and service of God. In this world appearances are most deceptive. The heart is enlivened by the obedience to the Rightful God, to keep away from forbidden things, and to bear hardships with patience.

Do not wish to be rich, be not lustful. Knowledge without practice is useless and action without sincerity is incomplete. Earn and eat and share your earnings with the needy and alleviate their sufferings and thus console them.

Do not complain of God before a man. God-consciousness is the key to success. Offer thanks and be content as long as the door of thy life is open. O people, make whatever you have undone ; wash away your sins ; right the wrongs you have committed ; cleanse what you have soiled ; return what you have taken.

It is improper to be a critic and a preacher unless one cleanses one's innerself in every way The indolent remains always deprived ; the halter of shame always enriches his neck. Abstain from loving the wicked. Be shameful before God Do not be negligent of your duty or remain indifferent. Spiritual progress can be attained by acting upon the dictates of Shari'ah. Whether you seek it or not, the food that God has apportioned for you will be provided to you.

The company of fools is harmful. If you befriend the ignorant, their ignorance will affect thee also. Know thy real self. Mere memorising of knowledge parrot-wise without devotion will not take you a step further on the right path. Your action is how your heart perceives and acts; the only requirement is that all your limbs should observe the bounds of Shari'ah. He who performs his deeds for showing off to the public has done nothing. Good deeds are performed being hidden from the eye of the people and not publicly for the sake of a show off; except that duties must be discharged in public, for the public must know that the duties entrusted to you are being performed honestly. If you have been careless in laying the foundations of your faith on a secure footing, the structure built upon those weak foundations can never be firm. If the foundation is secure and the structure decays, the fault may be corrected. The basis of action is belief in the oneness of God and sincerity of faith. He who possesses neither this belief nor this sincerity has no action to his credit. The cheat wears clean dress, but his heart is stained. The man who renounces the lawful things of the world and turns pious but becomes lazy in earning his livelihood, he uses religion as a means of getting by in the world and abstains from nothing. His condition is unknown to the common people, but is not hidden from honourable exceptions. All his piety and all his devotion is but in appearance. He has a glowing face; but his soul is barren. Devotion to God is not only performed by the body; it should also be performed by the heart. Your speech is sacred, but your heart is profane. You are a Muslim in appearance, but an infidel at heart. Outwardly you express belief in one God, but inwardly you are devoted to many gods. Your piety and your religion are only a veneer; your inside is rotten by evil; you may rightly be compared with a white-washed lavatory. The believer enlightens his soul first and secondly purifies his physical appearance. His example is like that of the master of the house. He builds the outer structure, and then turns to the construction from within and finally constructs the entrance gate. Only the faithful are put to trial. Serve and you shall be served. Do not be formal in offering your prayers. It is a pity that you learn Qur'an by heart (and become a Hafiz-i-Qur'an), but you do not act upon its teachings. You memorise the Sunnah of the Prophet, but do not show your devotion by conforming your actions to it. You preach to others, but do not practise it yourself. Why do you ask others to do, what you yourself do not perform? Don't you feel ashamed why do you profess a faith while you do not believe that in the heart of your heart. Do not waste your time in learning when you will not put your learning into practice. Observe the bounds of Shari'ah and protect them. The savant does not complain even under dire distress. True *Tasawwuf* can be attained by conforming to the Shari'ah. First, learn the law of the world. Second, go into seclusion to learn the law of the soul. Give up all worldly desires; your wants shall be fulfilled.

O Pedantic, Charlatan Moulvi! fear God! What became of thy weeping? What became of the confessions of thy sin? What became of thy devotional prayers to God by day and night? Where has gone your

zeal for learning true respect.

The shirts that thou wear, turban that covers thy head, wives that you may take into wedlock, house that you may inhabit, shop in which you may do business and all the other concerns of worldly life—are these the only objects that claim your attention. Turn your attention away from all those things. If any of those objects is ordained by God to be given unto you, you shall receive it at the proper time. The learned, the pure and the seers are like mountains that cannot be rocked by the storms of distress or hardships, nor can they be crumbled by those storms; they do not budge an inch from their station, which is the supreme belief in the Oneness of God.

Do not discriminate between the rich and the poor; make no distinction between them. Be a man of action. Do not remain ignorant of thy own accord. A learned man who puts his knowledge into use is the vicegerent of God. The man who lives soulfully is in fact a Muslim. You are a man of worldly passions. Do not take pride in being a worshipper. You utter maxims; your deeds are non-existent. If at all there be your deeds, they are devoid of sincerity and faith in the Oneness of God. Even if you feel an iota of love for this world, you will never get salvation. Struggle against inner desires is harder than the crusades of the world.

O Muslims! Is it of any use if we keep fast the whole day long and then break our fasts in the evening with ill-gotten and forbidden viands. O the consumers of ill-gotten wealth, you abstain from food and water during the day and when the time comes you break the

fast by drinking the blood of your Muslim brethren. You eat till your bellies are full and cannot contain more, while your neighbours suffer the pangs of hunger; and all the same you all profess to be true Musalmans. I say unto you: Either carry out all the obligations of Islam or give up proclaiming yourselves as Muslims. Share the grief of your fellow men; sympathise with them; alleviate their sufferings and God shall stand by you and remove your sufferings. Be kind to people on this earth and the God in Heaven will be kind unto you.

You trust in your passions; you trust in people; you depend upon your wealth, your business and you put your trust in the ruler of city. The thing you trust in is the object of thy worship. The thing you fear, the person from whom you expect advantage is the object of thy worship. Whomsoever you consider as your benefactor is the object of thy worship.

Do not give sage counsels to others with a sweet countenance, while your soul is rotten. The deceitful hypocrites get by in the world by means of sweet talk and in spite of being incompetent they put on the appearance of the noble; they try to talk like them and dress like them—but they don't act like the noble. Try and God shall come to your help. Struggle against the waves of the ocean and these waves shall carry you bumping to the shore. Advice is only heeded when it is exemplified by a practical person.

Evils of the World and the Path of Salvation

Anyone who attained salvation did not adopt any other path except the true ways of God and sought His

protection only.

God has observed : "The Almighty showered His blessings upon those who had lagged behind. Their sufferings had increased to such an extent that there was no peace for them on the earth and they were despaired of their lives. They realised then that there was no other way of salvation except devotion to the God Almighty. No one ever obtained salvation except by means of truth and piety."

God has said : "Allah blesses the pious with success and people are not granted any blessings by Allah unless they act truly in accordance with their faith."

God has said : "People who act according to the faith and do not break their covenant with God and excel in modesty shall be granted salvation."

God has said: "Do you not know that God sees every thing and I, thy Lord, say unto you that none obtained salvation without the command of Allah and His will which was previously known to Him only."

God has said: "Those for whom We have assured good shall never be cast into Hell." No one ever found salvation without turning his face away from world and God has affirmed that worldly life is but a sport and an illusion. The Prophet of God also affirmed that the root of all evil lies in the love of the world.

Those who wish to be near unto God can adopt no better means than to perform their duty to Allah. The Prophet of Allah (peace be upon him) further observed: The ways of the world have not been dear unto God ever since He created it. The world is profane in the

eyes of God and hence He never looked at it with gracious eye. The world is a curtain of mystery between God and man. The world is the touchstone which distinguishes gold from the tinsel (true from the false). He who is affected by the world cannot taste the sweetness of prayers to the Almighty God, for love of this world is the antithesis of the love of God and all that is dear unto God.

God promised His bounty to you, threatened you with His wrath, held out to you the blessings of comfort in Heaven, struck terror into your heart by showing the horrors of Hell. Thus did He call His creatures to obedience and belief in one God. In this manner did the Lord frightened you, threatened you, instilled awe into you, dissuaded you from evil, so that you may have no pretext for doing wrong and so that the needful be done. God has declared : "Allah sent Prophets who brought glad tidings and He sent Prophets who reminded the people of the doom that lay before them, so that people may have sure proof of God and may offer no excuses against the commands of the Almighty."

God declared: "If We had destroyed them without warning they would have thus submitted on the Day of Judgment: O Creator! Why did You not send us prophets to warn us of our impending doom, so that we would have taken heed and obeyed Thy Commands before our eternal damnation?"

God has affirmed: "We do not bring distress upon people without first sending Our Messengers to them."

God declared: "O people, you have received from God the right counsel, the cure for all ailments of the heart, the general directions and special blessings for

protection only.

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God declared: "O people, you have received from God the right counsel, the cure for all ailments of the heart, the general directions and special blessings for

the true believers *i.e.*, the Holy Qur'an."

For the sake of warning you and instilling fear into you God has declared: "God strikes terror into your hearts to warn you of His Wrath. But God is Beneficent to people." God said: "Take heed that all things are in the knowledge of God. Hence fear Him. Know that God is well aware of everything."

God declared: "O thou who are sensible, fear Me; fear the Day when you shall return to the presence of the Almighty. On that day everyone shall be paid according to his deeds and none would be treated unjustly. Fear the Day when one will not come to the help of another. No atonement will be acceptable nor any recommendation will avail you. O people! fear God and fear the Day when no father will be permitted to offer recompense for the sins of his son and no son shall be allowed to make atonements for the sins of his father. Without doubt God's covenant is true. So do not be deceived by worldly matters and do not fall into the deceitful trap of the Satan. Be on the side of God. Fear Him. Without doubt the quake of the Last Day is terrible. O people! fear your Lord He gave you birth through a man in this fashion that He created Adam first, then He created a couple and through the intercourse of this couple He produced a multitude of men and women. Fear the Lord by Whose Holy Name you make demands upon each other and hesitate from breaking relationships. Without doubt God is your Protector. O Faithful! fear God and tell th truth! O Faithful! fear God and each one of you should beware of what provision has he sent before him for

use on the Day of Judgment and continue to fear God. God is aware of thy deeds. Fear God, for His punishment is most severe. Save your lives and lives of your families from the fire whose fuel are men and stones. Do you think that there lies no purpose in your creation and that you shall not be brought back from worldly life into our Eternal presence? Does man think that he shall not be called to account and be left alone? Do not the people fear that destruction will descend upon their habitations while they are asleep during the night or are you not afraid that destruction will descend on you during daylight while you are engaged in merry-making?

O meek one! What is thy answer to all those questions and what are thy deeds in respect of those matters? Why don't you abstain from entertaining evil passions of thy heart, which will throw you into the abyss of misfortune and misery, where fires will burn you to ashes, the snakes will bite you and sting you and the scorpions and insects will pierce you with their stings and bites; where the angels and guards will give you severe beating and where you will be subjected to new tortures everyday; where you shall be treated at par with the Pharaohs, Haman and Qarun and you shall be treated on the same plan as devils. God has affirmed that He creates an opening for the God-fearing and sends them provisions from resources which they never dreamt of. He who fears God, God blots out all his sins and increases his rewards.

O man! what has deceived you about this Merciful Lord Who created you; Who fashioned you in the right shape and set you on the right path? Has not the

time come yet for believers to soften their hearts with the remembrance of God? God has invited you to tread the path of righteousness ; He has called you to obedience and has promised His kindness and His limitless blessings and pure food and peace and comfort. He has set you on a right direction and has explained all reasons. He has taken it upon Himself to forgive thy sins and blot out thy errors and has given assurance to increase thy reward and His blessings.'' And God has declared : "Allah has warned you against neglecting His commands and becoming unmindful turning a deaf ear to the commands, directions and warnings of the Almighty, so that you may not become indifferent." God stated : "Allah created you. He brought you into Being from nothingness. There was a void before, then he put life into you. He enriched you when you were deprived; He strengthened you when you were weak. You were blind, but He endowed you with insight to see what was good for you. He gave you knowledge when you were ignorant. He set you on the right path when you were lost in sinful ways. Hence an unmindful person! Why dost thou sit idle and do not ask for His limitless blessings? Why dost thou hesitate in showing devotions to Him? Obedience to Him will earn you honour in this world and make you loyal in the world to come and your high esteem shall be raised higher still. Do you wish for the life of this world only and want to exchange what is inferior with what is far better? You give preference to this world and people of this world and mortal things over eternal Paradise and the company of Messengers of God, the Truthful and Martyrs in the

ways of Almighty. Have not these words of the Lord come to your hearing?" Have you preferred worldly life to eternal life? The interests of worldly life will not avail you in the end. You like worldly life, even though life in the world to come will be eternal and far superior. Hence the unbelievers who disobey and prefer the interests of this world shall find their eternal abode in Hell. Beware, the infidel shall be cast into Hell. The extent of the severity of punishment and the allotment in the different regions of Hell would be according to the nature of his evil deeds and bad manners. The faithful shall get into Paradise and the extent of joy and the ranks in the Paradise would be determined by good deeds. God has created Paradise and filled it with delights to bless the believers and He has created Hell and filled it with horror to punish the evil-doers. He has created the world and filled it with pleasure and pain in order to test the faithful. He created beings but kept Paradise and Hell hidden from their eyes. Nevertheless the worldly pain and pleasure are but a sample of grief or happiness in the world to come ; they are a foretaste of comfort and distress in the eternal world. God made some men kings on this earth. He made the people fear them. He gave them dominion and appointed them rulers. This is only an example of God's Sovereignty and His rule, and the Lord has revealed all this in the Holy Qur'an. In this Book He made explicit His state, His Sovereignty, the system by which He rules the universe, His beneficence and His rewards with appropriate examples. God then observed: "We put these similitudes before you for your own betterment. These similitudes

can only be understood by the learned and the enlightened and so those who have the cognition of the Lord can comprehend the instances given by Him. The use of a prototype or a model is that you can think well of the unseen Reality by observing its model and may realise the hidden state of things by looking at what is presented before your eyes. Your mind will thus comprehend what cannot be observed by the physical eye. By understanding the example your heart shall comprehend the message which contains information pertaining to the world of angels and the sovereign of the world and the Lord of religion, *i.e.* the Almighty Allah."

For Those who Confront the Danger of Poverty

My brethren! Satan tempts us with fornication and obscene acts. He fills our hearts with doubts and provokes us to renounce our faith in God. When we make up our minds to act in conformity with the golden principles of Islam, Satan frightens us with the bogeys of economic crisis and decline in our international prestige and we must never disobey Almighty God by falling into the trap of such an evil-minded enemy. The easiest way to save ourselves from falling into the devil's trap is that we should set out on the way of God and engage ourselves in carrying out the commands of the Religion of Allah.

For the Non-Conformists of Religion

O Muslims! the privilege and trust that the Lord God has bestowed on us so that we may obey His commands that same privilege and trust was reposed

in people of yore, but when those people were guilty of breach of trust and become unworthy of this Trust, they were dispossessed of all worldly honour and the trust of religion and piety was withdrawn from them and they were thrown into disgrace and infamy. O Muslims! if we too renounced obedience to God and offered no thanks to Him for the bounty of Faith He has bestowed upon us and we failed to make the right use of this bounty and if we did not illuminate our way of life and the lives of others through this bounty of God, beware then that we shall meet the same end as our unbelieving forebears did. You need not go through the ancient times in libraries or stand in thought for years amidst the ruins of old times to learn this simple lesson. The people of the nation of Israel who still exist in the world ask them: In spite of their old habit of absurd argumentation and falsification of facts they cannot refute the authenticity of these historical truths.

For the Attention of Those Who Hide Facts

Gentlemen! Listen, God revealed the one and only Book, *i.e.* the Holy Qur'an for all of us. And you who learn and know this Book, have created schisms among the *Ummah* who follow this Book. The dissensions and sectarianism amongst you is not based on honest thinking but is the result of envy malice and disbelief. All this has undermined the unity of the *Millat*. The call to carry out the duties of faith has ended. Muslims are one nation and one body. "Muslims are Muslims" such as was observed by Hadrat Ibrahim and all the other Messengers of God.

and such as was declared by all the companions of the Prophet that we are all Muslims first and last. There is time yet for you gentlemen to make up all differences and close all schisms and bury sectarianism. The learned among the people of Israel had also concealed the truth. To-day you gentlemen must also reflect and pay heed. There are several among you who suppress reality and such people for reasons of personal aggrandisement and in order to gain fame are creating schisms in the *Millat* in the name of Holy Qur'an. Save the people from being caught in this trap.

If you gentlemen entertain the illusion that since you have entered the fold of Islam, the gates of Paradise shall be opened unto you, you had better get rid of this false notion. Lend your ears and be attentive : Terrible hardships, severe trials and blood-curdling tribulations await you. At this juncture God's help will only pull you out of the malaise, provided you hold fast to patience, sink differences, unite all Muslims on one platform and do away with all sectarianism. O Gentlemen ! such as are shy of the name of Islam ! You found and raise different sects in the name of those venerable persons who professed the one and only faith and they all were followers of Islam and were called Muslims. And the propagation of the Law of Islam was their common concern.

The religion for which the beloved Messenger of God shed his blood is now waning before our very eyes and we rest content in our homes. Come ! Let us engage ourselves in the business of calling people into the fold of Islam.

A Plea to the Businessmen and Traders

My friends ! elders ! the Jews observed the law of God when doing commerce among themselves ; but their dealings with the Arabians, and especially with Muslims were strange indeed. While doing business with them the Jews were guilty of deceit, breach of promise and embezzlement of what was put in trust with them. In fact they observed no code of ethics or religion while dealing with Muslims in daily life. When the Jews were reprimanded for embezzlement, breach of trust and foul play, they felt no shame ; instead they declared that their Book had taught them to expropriate the property of the ignorant Arabs. This was the greatest false accusation levelled by the Jews against the Arabs. Allah befriends those who adhere to the rules of honesty, fulfilment of promise and true representation in business dealings. The moral is that with whomsoever we engage in business, be he a Muslim or an infidel, or impious, familiar or a stranger, we must deal with him honestly and truthfully. Tell me then, will our traders and businessmen follow the commands of God in their commerce or do they intend to act otherwise ?

A Plea to All Musalmans

Friends, elders ! what was the condition of the Arabian peninsula before the Messenger came with the blessings of God for the whole world ? That country was inhabited by people who were plagued with mutual hatred. There was no love or amity or fellow-feeling among them. The country was a volcano which emitted a continuous lava of hatred and enmity

and habitations were burnt to ashes far and wide in that land. There was internecine warfare among the tribes. Each region was in a state of war with the other region. Passions were so wild and excitable that rivers of blood would flow on account of petty feuds. Once a war started its flames were kept burning through the centuries. The chain of battles between the Aus and Khazraj lasted for hundred and twenty years. There was no security of life or property. At last the blessings of Islam were showered upon the land. With the advent of the Prophet, the barren land of Arabia flowered into a garden. Hatred gave way to love. Ferocity turned into affection ; Mercy took the place of vengeance ; Selfishness changed into sincerity and self-sacrifice ; Pride and vanity were replaced by humility and generosity. It was a revolution that changed the shape of the entire Arab society. The inhabitants of the Arabian desert turned the course of world history through the blessings of this revolution. Almighty God, by His immense bounty, sent His beloved Messenger whose blessings and virtues united the divided hearts and made all men brothers unto each other.

The Messenger of God pulled them out of the abyss of degeneration and disgrace and put them on the road to progress and honour. People were standing on the brink of Hell ; they would have fallen into the pit of Fire had their eyes remained shut but for a little more while. Presently the blessings of God came to their aid and showed them through the beloved Prophet the way to save themselves from the Fires of Hell.

We ought to remind ourselves of the bounties of

God that He bestowed upon us and we should study, understand and act upon the teachings of the Holy Qur'an in order to avoid disunity among our ranks and to wipe out schisms. It is an important obligation to propagate this permanent and final religion which has revolutionised the world of man. If there be no such men in this *Millat* who would devote their lives to the mission of propagating this religion to the farthest corners of the world, then this Universal Message of Peace will remain restricted within the bounds of a few countries. This would be unfair to the cause of this message and it would be a great injustice to those nations who are groping in the dark and who are seeking the light of true knowledge. Moreover, the nation or country which has already embraced Islam, there is a possibility that their faith may weaken. They too may slacken their efforts and their enthusiasm may cool off. They may be affected by evil influences spread around them and be led astray. Hence if there be no class of such missionaries among us whose vocation in life should be to instil the wisdom of Islam into the minds of ignorant people ; to lighten them, to keep up their enthusiasm and to save their minds and souls from extraneous evil influences then many evils may creep into this very nation which is the standard-bearer of the religion of Islam. The importance of both these missions, *i.e.* to keep the *Millat* steady on the path of Islam and to propagate the message of enlightenment among other nations cannot be overemphasised. At this juncture non-cocoperation with Tablighi Jama'at which is working for the promotion of the law of religion is nothing

less than a great sin.

At this time it is obligatory upon all of us to spare some time and help in the work of the missionary party and along with this we should do our best to establish a party which, by virtue of its philosophy and action, its inner and outward stance and its conduct and character, may present the true reflection of the life and work of the Messenger of God. In addition to imparting religious knowledge to them, it is imperative to inculcate the virtues of purity of soul, strength of character and concord of soul and conduct among the party men. To this end the biggest financial sacrifice, wisdom of faith, enlightenment of heart and spiritual training should be freely provided. We shall be called to account for negligence by the Almighty God if we fail to perform this essential duty. History bears witness to the fact that as long as a class of such missionary people bearing these characteristics, existed Islam continued to flourish. As long as the Islamic schools continued to produce such luminaries as Al-Ghazzali, Al-Razi, Al-Sa'adi and Baidawi and the Shrines continued to nurture such world-renowned savants as Roomi, Al-Hajveri, Ajmeri, Zakria Multani, al-Sheikh, Sirhindi (may God bless them), the darkness was dispelled by the light of Islam, the power of right continued to demolish the castles of wrong. Let us have a look at ourselves to-day. Sadness and misfortune is writ large on our faces. Ask not about my personal condition ! My state is so painful that I lack the strength to describe it and you couldn't bear to listen to it either. I pray to God and ask for His blessings upon our sad state. I beg Him to grant us the capacity

to share the labours of the workers who propagate the religion of Allah.

The Only Way to Close Schisms

O Muslims! Avoid schisms and dissensions and beware of the fate of former nations who were plagued with dissensions. The Jews and the Christians had grown indifferent to the laws of their religions. They attached to the peripheral and ordinary problems such great importance that they issued proclamations of infidelity and undermined the unity of their nations on that account. We are caught in the same situation to-day. The *Millat* which follows one God, one Prophet and one Book and has one House of Worship *i.e.*, the Ka'ba, this *Millat* has divided herself into various sects. Some greedy men have raised the barriers of hatred and enmity for seeking selfish ends. The way to unify the *Millat* does not appear in sight. When matters have come to such a pass that people indulge in argumentation in regard to the virtues and excellence of the Prophet of God and the public have acquired a taste for religious debates, what then remains there which can bind us together as a cohesive *Millat*?

The condition of the soul will be clearly writ on the faces on the Day of Judgment. Those whose hearts are enlightened by the glory of faith shall have glowing faces even as the sun glares. And those whose hearts are blackened with the sin of leading other people astray, their faces will be likewise blackened on the Doomsday. Our victory and salvation lies in this: We should sacrifice our all to promote the religion of God, so that we may be counted on the Day of Judgment

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O Muslims! Avoid schisms and dissensions and beware of the fate of former nations who were plagued with dissensions. The Jews and the Christians had grown indifferent to the laws of their religions. They attached to the peripheral and ordinary problems such great importance that they issued proclamations of infidelity and undermined the unity of their nations on that account. We are caught in the same situation to-day. The *Millat* which follows one God, one Prophet and one Book and has one House of Worship *i.e.*, the Ka'ba, this *Millat* has divided herself into various sects. Some greedy men have raised the barriers of hatred and enmity for seeking selfish ends. The way to unify the *Millat* does not appear in sight. When matters have come to such a pass that people indulge in argumentation in regard to the virtues and excellence of the Prophet of God and the public have acquired a taste for religious debates, what then remains there which can bind us together as a cohesive *Millat*?

The condition of the soul will be clearly writ on the faces on the Day of Judgment. Those whose hearts are enlightened by the glory of faith shall have glowing faces even as the sun glares. And those whose hearts are blackened with the sin of leading other people astray, their faces will be likewise blackened on the Doomsday. Our victory and salvation lies in this: We should sacrifice our all to promote the religion of God, so that we may be counted on the Day of Judgment

among those whose faces will be bright. It will not be for nothing that on the Doomsday some will be showered upon with blessings and glory and others will be condemned with curses and fury. It will all be the consequences of your own deeds. God is far above to send His punishment upon people without cause, nor does He disregard people's merits. Allah is not an Oppressor. On the other hand we are not fair to ourselves and we continue to increase our bill of errors. We are inviting punishment by giving up the work of the propagation of religion. We are the devotees of the blessed Prophet and God has bestowed upon us the glorious title of "The Most Blessed People". We have been declared superior to all the other nations that lived on this earth before us, because our life's mission is pure and lofty. We live so that right may prevail ; we live so that the light of true knowledge may spread and the darkness of ignorance may vanish. We live so that the spell of falsehood may be broken and rightful living may come into vogue. We live so that the modern animalism, which has made the stronger cruel exploiters and the weaker as downtrodden and destitute, may be wiped out. In addition to that having put our belief in one and only God, our life's mission should be to call upon other people to have faith in Him. The devotees of former religions also persuaded people to do right and forbade them to commit sins and those nations were no doubt believers in God. We should also take up the work of spreading the religion of God in the four corners of the world, energetically, sincerely and with a spirit of self-sacrifice. God has blessed us with the

crowning mercy among the comity of nations. The mission of righteousness espoused by the faithful of other religions was limited to a certain area, a certain people and it could last for only a certain period of time. But the blessings of the faith of believers in Allah continued to be showered upon the lands and high seas, highlands and plains, upon the white races and the black, and the farthest lands and the nearest countries and the craving people of every region quenched their thirst of knowledge from the religion of Islam. The blessings of the workers of Islam are not reserved to themselves only ; they are open to all. Let us even to-day discharge our duty to God by engaging ourselves in the real work. The way to save ourselves from sectarianism is clear. I request every elder, every ruler, every businessman, every landlord with all the humility at my command that you should all in the spheres of your influence strive to put the people in the service of God. Thus by doing the work of propagation of Islam you will not only earn the blessings of God for yourselves but also for the people whom you press into the service of Islam.

This work of the propagation of Islam can be compared to Noah's ark. He who boards this ark will, by the grace of God, find salvation.

You shall find the workers engaged in the propagation of Islam in Madrasah-Arabia, Raiwind. Please visit them and by sharing their work earn a high rank in the Paradise. And remember this humble Khawaja Muhammad Islam in your prayers always for he finds in this whole world none more needy than himself.

A Prescription for Spiritual Ailments

Hadrat Shibli (may Allah be pleased with him) said to a wise person, "I suffer from the disease of committing sins. Give me a medicine, if you have one, to cure this disease." When these two were talking to each other a man was busy picking up straws in the plain in front of them. The man raised his head and said, "Those who think of Thee, pick up the straws. Shibli, come here, I shall tell you a medicine : take the flowers of modesty, the fruits of contentment and thanksgiving, the roots of humility and meekness, the blossoms of sorrow, the leaves of the tree of truth, the bark of devotion, the seeds of politeness : gather them all and start pounding them and mix them with the tears of penitence everyday. Then put everything in the kettle of your heart and put the kettle on the fire of thy eagerness. When everything is cooked, put it through the sieve of your clean heart, and the sugar of your sweet tongue and again put it on the hot fire of love. When everything is done and the compound is ready, cool it off with the air of the fear of God before using it."

Hadrat Shibli (may God bless him)! looked up to see the man but the sage had disappeared. Verse :

> Those who dispensed cure for heart-pain have packed up their business!

The Last Sermon

Of the chief of the Prophets, the final Messenger, the Mercy of the worlds, Hadrat Muhammad, (peace be upon him), the Prophet of God (peace be upon him) delivered that historic sermon on 9th Dhul Hijjah in the

10th year of Hijra, which is called his 'Last Sermon' by the study of which hearts of Musalmans will continue to be enlightened with the light of faith till the Last Day of the world. The Prophet of God said : "O people! Listen to me. I know not whether you and I shall gather together at this place another time. O people! you should accord the same respect and safeguard the honour and properties of one another as you respect and safeguard the honour and respects of this city and the holiness of this month. You will soon be called to the Presence of God and He shall ask you about your deeds. O people! You have rights upon women and women have rights upon you. Treat women with kindness and love, for in God's name didst thou take them as wives and by God's word didst thou make their bodies lawful unto thee. Be honest in the matter of trusts and protect yourselves from sin. Usury is unlawful. From to-day onwards the debtor shall repay the principal only and I take the initiative in writing off the interest due to 'Abbas b. 'Abdul Muttalib. All feuds dating from the pre-Islamic period are declared closed. The first claim of blood I abolish is that of Ibn Rabi'ah b. Harith b. 'Abdul Muttalib. Look after your slaves. Give them the same food as you eat yourself and clothe them in the same garments as you wear. If they make a mistake which you are unable to excuse, dismiss them ; for they are the creatures of God and have not been sent into the world to be trampled upon. O people! Listen to me carefully. Remember, all Muslims are brothers unto each other. The property of one brother cannot be expropriated by another ; unless one willingly surrenders his pro-

perty to another.' Save yourselves from committing excesses. Carry my words to those who are not present here to-day. It may be that those who are absent to-day may retain my message better than those who are present and are listening to me directly." Having said this the Prophet (peace be upon him) enquired from the audience : "Have I communicated the message of God unto you?" Every person answered : "Yes, you have". The Prophet repeated this question three times and having received the answer in the affirmative each time he looked upwards to the Heavens and observed : "O God, bear witness! I have communicated Thy message unto Thy people and I have carried out my mandate."

Deserving of your good wishes while praying unto God.

The most humble,
KHAWAJA MOHAMMAD ISLAM.

